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SHAN SHUI

MOUNTAIN AND WATER PAINTING MAGAZINE

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山水

SHAN SHUI

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The Shanshui Magazine editorial and advisory board is composed of artists, scholars, and curators who share a deep commitment to fostering cultural dialogue between China and the world.
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Art is one of the deepest expressions of human thought — a way to communicate ideas, emotions, and visions of the world. Every artist, rooted in their own culture, reflects not only personal experience but also the intellectual and spiritual traditions of their society.

At Shanshui Magazine, we believe that art is a powerful tool for intercultural dialogue. By exploring the encounter between Chinese and Western artistic traditions, we aim to build bridges between two great civilizations and encourage a renewed understanding of art and nature.

Chinese shanshui (mountain and water) painting — with its 1,500 years of history — offers an alternative vision of the world, where harmony between humans and nature is central. This philosophy contrasts yet beautifully complements Western aesthetics, opening new ways of seeing and creating.

Our magazine presents contemporary Chinese and international artists, research on painting theory, and reflections on environmental aesthetics. We wish to make these ideas accessible not only to academics but to anyone curious about the living dialogue between art, ecology, and culture.

Through this magazine, we hope to promote a form of artistic expression that helps us rethink our relationship with reality, with nature, and with each other — beyond cultural boundaries.

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Professor Maurizio Paolillo, teaches Chinese language and philology at the department of Asian, Africa and Mediterranean studies in "L'Orientale" University of Naples.

OUR APPROACH

FROM THE FIGURE OF THE CHINESE INTELLECTUAL ARTIST TO CONTEMPORANEITY.

DURING THE EIGHTH CENTURY CHINA, A NEW FIGURE OF INTELLECTUAL ARTIST WAS BORN: THIS FIGURE WOULD BECOME TOPICAL IN THE CHINESE CULTURAL PANORAMA AND MADE ITS WAY TO THE PRESENT DAY.

WENREN HUA 文人画, IS THE ONE WHO, FOLLOWING THE HUMANISTIC VALUES AND TEACHINGS OF THE TRADITION, UPDATES AND APPLIES THEM TO THE ARTISTIC-INTELLECTUAL NEEDS OF HIS TIME. THIS PROCESS HAS NEVER STOPPED, AND STILL PERSISTS IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD.

THE WENREN HUA ENCOMPASSES THE POET, THE PAINTER, THE CALLIGRAPHER, THE THEORIST, THE SCHOLAR AND THE INTELLECTUAL IN GENERAL IN A SINGLE FIGURE AND SEES THE CULTIVATION OF THE SPIRIT AND MIND AS ONE OF THE MAIN PURPOSES OF HIS/HER WORK.

IN THIS WAY, A CLOSE LINK IS ESTABLISHED BETWEEN PRACTICE AND ARTISTIC THEORY; AT THE SAME TIME THERE IS NO SEPARATION BETWEEN THE ARTS, AND THERE IS A COMMON THREAD BETWEEN INTELLECTUAL PRACTICE AND MATERIAL APPLICATION.

OF COURSE THIS FIGURE IS CLOSELY LINKED TO CHINESE CULTURAL HERITAGE, BUT THIS DOES NOT MAKE IT LESS COMPATIBLE WITH THE ARTISTIC-CULTURAL NEEDS OF WESTERNIZED CONTEMPORANEITY.

IT ALSO FITS NATURALLY INTO THE TREND OF ENVIRONMENTAL AESTHETICS, WHICH IS AN EXPRESSIVE CHANNEL OF CONTEMPORARY ART OF FUNDAMENTAL IMPORTANCE, GIVEN THAT THE BIGGEST PROBLEMS THAT AFFLICT OUR SOCIETY ARE OFTEN LINKED TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE DESTRUCTIVE APPROACH THAT CONTEMPORARY MEN HAVE TOWARDS IT.

RESPECT FOR NATURE AND THE NEED TO PRESERVE IT BY LIVING WITH IT IN HARMONY ARE INTRINSIC ELEMENTS OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE THOUGHT AND THAT OF THE WENREN HUA, WHICH SEE MAN AND NATURE AS TWO ELEMENTS THAT ARE PART OF THE SAME SYSTEM: IN THESE TERMS, IN ORDER TO PRESERVE HUMAN LIFE NATURAL EXISTENCE MUST ALSO BE PROTECTED, OR ELSE WE WOULD GO TOWARDS THE DECAY OF BOTH.

MANIFESTO

We find ourselves living in the era of globalization. Thanks to the infosphere that we live in, with just one click we can be in Togo, with two clicks you can be studying Sanskrit, with three you're already updated on what's going on in Bhutan, and with four more clicks you're listening to a piece played with the duduk, and immediately after we could be looking at two whirling dervishes. In half a day we become experts in Armenian music, Sufi spirituality, Himalayan geopolitics and in any other aspect of world culture.

Fantastic. Finally, a world without cultural barriers, devoted to exchange and access to mutual knowledge. In this global village without borders, we dance to the beat of superficiality, sloppy culture and of cultural arrogance, where ignorance is adorned with two-dimensional images, where the concept of "knowing that you do not know" has been abolished, although without knowing.

Ah I forgot, in this Village the chief is western, the customs and habits are mostly western, the linguistic and material means of communication are western, like almost every intellectual expression and world view of its inhabitants. The inhabitants tend to ignore what is found outside the Village, not by choice, but by condition, not out of lack of curiosity, but because of the limited means. The Village is truly global on a physical level, it truly embraces the entire earth's surface, but in fact it remains on the surface, it does not deepen, and if it deepens it does it in its own way, as it would in the centre from which it developed. In fact, the Village is ancient and full of History and histories, it has always had to do with multiculturalism, always in expansion and translation, but only recently has it reached global status.

The Village is now global, so everyone is welcome but the rules to follow are those of the village head. Everyone can bring something to the table, but it will still have to be adapted to the matrix of the Village.

With these premises, it is possible to face and analyse infinite issues concerning the actual state of the alleged globalization. Of how, for instance, it is believed to know different cultures, but that in reality this knowledge is based only on a store of empty images which are then filled with the world view of the aforementioned head of the Village. The same goes for that mercantile capitalism that has come to every corner of the globe, but that manages to give the best of itself only if it follows the needs of the Village.
We stand against a single world view, when in fact there are many. The ones that does not support diversity, but translates them, one that does not make them participate in the debate with their own voices, but accepts them only after a trial of metamorphosis. We are against the imperialism of tastes and customs, of judgment, of means of expression, and of what to express, a situation which inevitably leads to a cultural flattening.

Against this self-proclaimed global Village, it does not have the ability to see neighbouring villages, since he believes that all possible villages are within him.

We as Sino-artists (mostly of non-Chinese origin, who live in China, who devote themselves to the study and practice Chinese painting, even without having a structured training of Western origin behind them), will focus on the areas concerning our cultural sphere, precisely that of Chinese art. Especially those related to painting, with a particular eye for landscape painting, which from now on we will call according to the Chinese denomination, mountain and water painting

"*shanshui hua* 山水画"

The main will is to communicate with the Village through our art and our words, trying to present one of the many shaded areas with which it is scattered. Our task is to find a language that is intelligible to the Village as well as faithful to the original meaning. Without smoothing its diversity, without avoiding clashes, without sweetening the pill. In this way it will be the Village that will make the effort to understand, and only in this way will the communication be successful. In fact, we trust in the Village's ability to understand languages not forged by itself.

The reasons that drive us in this campaign are varied and erudition is not one of those. At best it can be a side effect.

One of the biggest problems of the Village is that he believes that only movements of progress or evolutions exist inside it, only he has reached the status of "modern", and those who are not indigenous come from a static culture, backward and anchored to the past; without the use of the means forged by the Village and without its revolutionary spirit no one can participate in the dialogue of contemporaneity. So, to finally get into the subject, in the Village Chinese painting is traditional, therefore linked to the past, unable to evolve, something good just for the art history books and museums, worthy of respect, but with the same respect that is given for archaeological finds.

There is no conception of a modern or contemporary Chinese painting, also because when the term Chinese painting is pronounced, for some reason it is always accompanied by the adjective "traditional", which clearly denies the concept of modernity. Chinese art can only be defined as modern if expressed through the means and processes of modern western art.

Revelation! There is modern and contemporary Chinese art; mountain and water painting has been evolveing for at least 1500 years, and continues to evolve, and other painting exppressions are even older. As obvious as it seems, China is extremely large, therefore there are many centres of cultural irradiation, and for this reason there are various schools within China that follow different pictorial expressions. Consequently there is not just one movement of contemporary Chinese painting.

Our main objective follows:

To spread the knowledge of contemporary Chinese painting outside of China, and to give voice to the great artists of the last century as well as to the new young artists.

Why is it important you may ask? For starters, in order to make sense of the term globalization. But above all, to enrich the Village and to redefine its ideas of intellectual absolutism.

Chinese art, together with all the other intellectual expressions of China, refers to a system of values that has come down to the present day from ancient times. This great apparatus of knowledge and ideas has influenced and is still influencing the world view of Chinese people and of course also their artistic expressions. The same discourse can be re-proposed in a general way also to the evolution of the western mind, a process that probably was less coherent than the Chinese one, which however led to the formation of various expressions of thought rooted in the conception of the world that the Village forged during its evolution. And this is exactly the key point of our reasoning, once the world interpretation system is established, it is almost impossible to get out of it, as it is invisible, and its boundaries are not recognizable. Because it being the only view you know, you believe that it is the only view that exists. Just to clarify, it's like those unfortunate people who were chained in the platonic cave. It wasn't until someone came in from the outside, did they realize the condition they were in.

This was also the case for China until the mid-nineteenth century. China behaved like the Village, just another Village that did not see those who were outside of it, except of course through its own modalities. And even though external cultural influences were accepted, it was always retranslated in Chinese terms, just like the Village does. As a consequence, there was a sense of cultural superiority compared to that which was not Chinese. Until one terrible day, when the barbarians arrived with cannons and rifles and destroyed the armies of the great empire. On that day, besides the fall of many lives, many certainties also fell in terms of value. Their system had not protected them from catastrophe, as it once did since the dawn of Chinese culture. This was not the first time that China fell into the hands of foreigners, and every time the foreigners were sinicized. Thus, their cultural continuity persisted. However, the value system was still slowly collapsing to the point where it almost disappeared. Since then it has rebuilt itself, but the system of the other foreign villages took a hold as well, strong of its modernity.

Accordingly, in contemporary China it can be said that there are two systems, the original and the imported one. The same could be said for the world of art, but art can be applied at will on any area. This has created a unique situation where the two worlds communicate with each other, sometimes one taking over the other, creating conflicts but also a very fertile ground for creativity.

It is exactly for this reason that we want to make this new system of thought known to the Village, only then will it be able to see its own boundaries, so that it will be able to ask new questions and give itself new answers.

Let's take a concrete example. The ancient western visual arts and the Renaissance up to modernity, basically acted in the field of mimesis. In painting, all the techniques to represent the visual aspect of the surrounding world comes together. Now coming back to the Village, to top it all, there was this terrifying yoke called Albertan's perspective. The Village gave a great deal of value to the sight, making it almost the only tool for perceiving reality. Establishing invisible perceptual borders because they were all-encompassing. However, at a certain point artists and intellectuals got tired of this conception and thus historical avant-garde was born. Unfortunately, not knowing any other way of perceiving the world other than the anthropocentric one of the gaze, they found themselves in a rather uncomfortable position, so much so that the path ended with destruction of the form and that of the painting itself, and having to resort to new media to be able to express themselves. It is precisely for these reasons that in contemporary era we refer to paintings as an "old lady" who keeps up with new artistic expressions with great difficulty.

So where is all this getting at? In China, the influence of western art came between the late 1800s and early 1900's. The first to arrive was via Japan, the realistic techniques of the Barbizon school. And what were the most shocking innovations for the Chinese? Mimesis, focal perspective, chiaroscuro, and all those techniques which at the time in the West were considered regressed, representatives of a system that in those years the avant-gardes despised because of its anti-contemporary expressions. Why was this seen in China as revolutionary and innovative? Because traditional pictorial theories disgusted the view and representation of form as perceived by our eyes, therefore it was an almost completely unexplored area.

China has had the good fortune of meeting and accepting a different way of interpreting the world, so why should the Village be deprived of it?

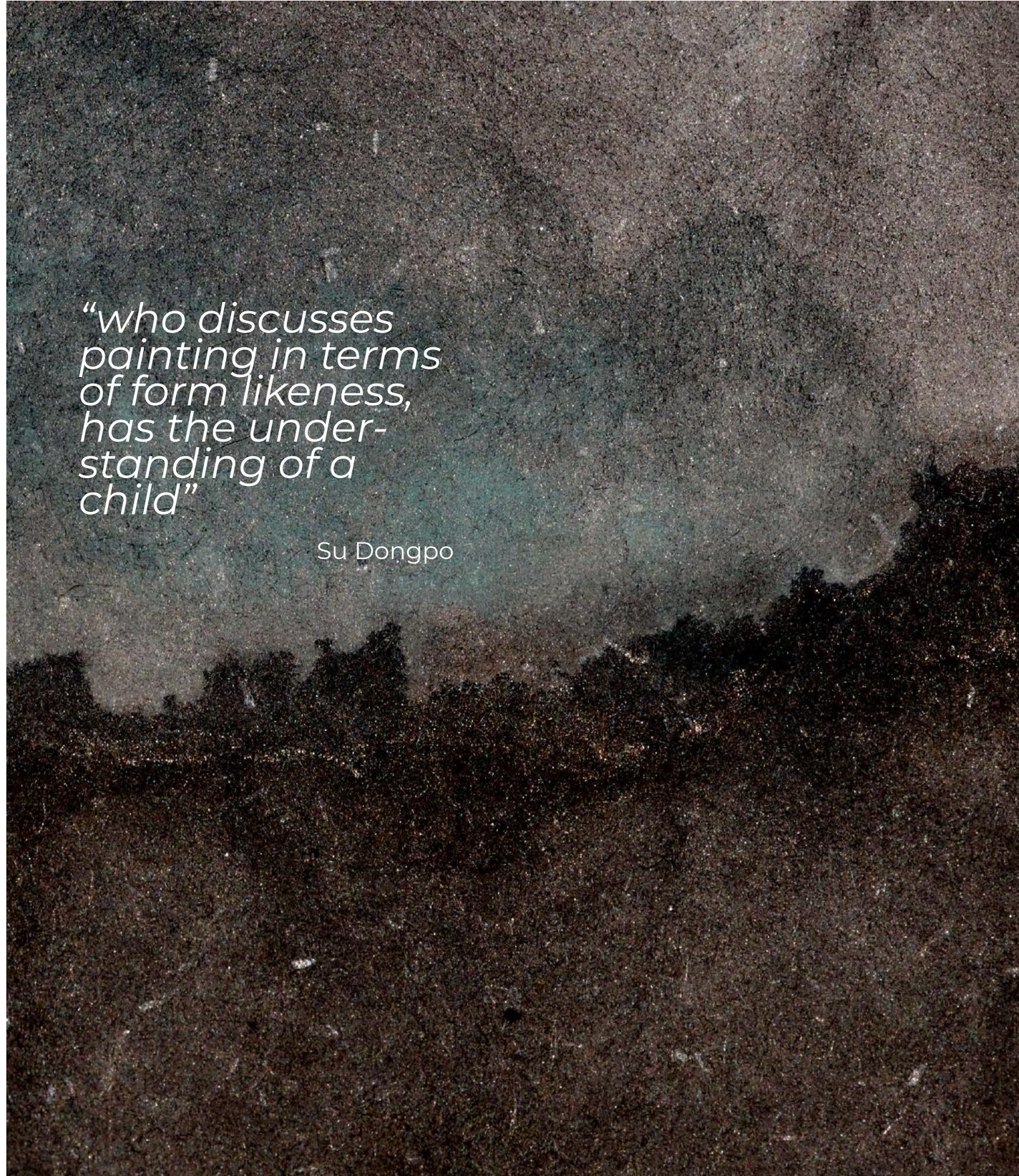
Just how much could a new way of understanding reality help the old painting of the Village? A whole world would open up, which should not mimic the Chinese one, but be inspired by it. So, we also take sides against the supremacism of sight and consequently against anthropocentrism. Our desire is to introduce these new visions, these new conceptions, and these new values. Not that the Village is completely unaware of it, but this knowledge is hidden in academic publications, accessible to those interested in the subject, but very far from the world of contemporary art or anyone else.

To conclude, we will introduce one of these intrinsic aspects of Chinese art which can be of great help and source of inspiration for our beloved Village. Why is mountain and water painting of great value in the contemporary world and why should the Village re-evaluate it? In the great pictorial experience of the Village, landscape painting as an independent genre was born late and died early. The fact that in China it is already the higher form of painting and has a millennium and a half of history should make us ask questions about how it has probably been underestimated. Well, in reality it has not been underestimated, in fact there is no right and wrong in art, it has been evaluated according to the means that the Village head, according to the conceptions and ideas, precisely for this

reason, I repeat, we must open the doors to new value systems.

Art cannot be alienated from the reality in which it is produced, and one of the most important themes for us is that of ecology, in fact this hyper capitalist Village has massacred the world in which we live and does not seem to want to take steps back. Many have already set in motion to counter this destructive madness, but there is no contest. In the Village there has recently been talk of environmental aesthetics that lashes out against anthropocentrism to concert on environmental beauties, therefore going against one, the axioms of western aesthetics since ancient Greece, against that conception that sees man as the superior creature and dominant in the ecumene. This new point of view, at least for the Village, is one of the basic aspects of Chinese ethics, philosophy and aesthetics, is found in the texts at the base of Chinese culture, at the basis of Confucian philosophy and Daoist thought and continues to be repeated until modern times, conception that does not just appreciate environmental beauties, but its holistic conception of the universe puts man on the same level as any other creation of nature. In *Yi Zhuan* 易传 (5th century BCE), a commentary on *Yi Jing* 易经, it is written that "the greatest virtue of heaven and earth is life" (天地之大德曰生), that is to say that the greatest virtue is to create an environment where all life forms and natural elements can coexist in harmony.

For this reason, too, the category of still life does not exist in Chinese painting, in fact for the Chinese artist it would be absurd to paint lifeless subjects.
For these and other reasons, the Village and the artists that reside in it will benefit from learning Chinese art. Mountain and water painting will inspire them, the beauty of nature will awaken the minds and set the minds in motion. The boundaries of the Village will begin to appear and we can finally begin to break them down.



Contemporary Tradition – inherit and transmit

By; Giacomo Bruni

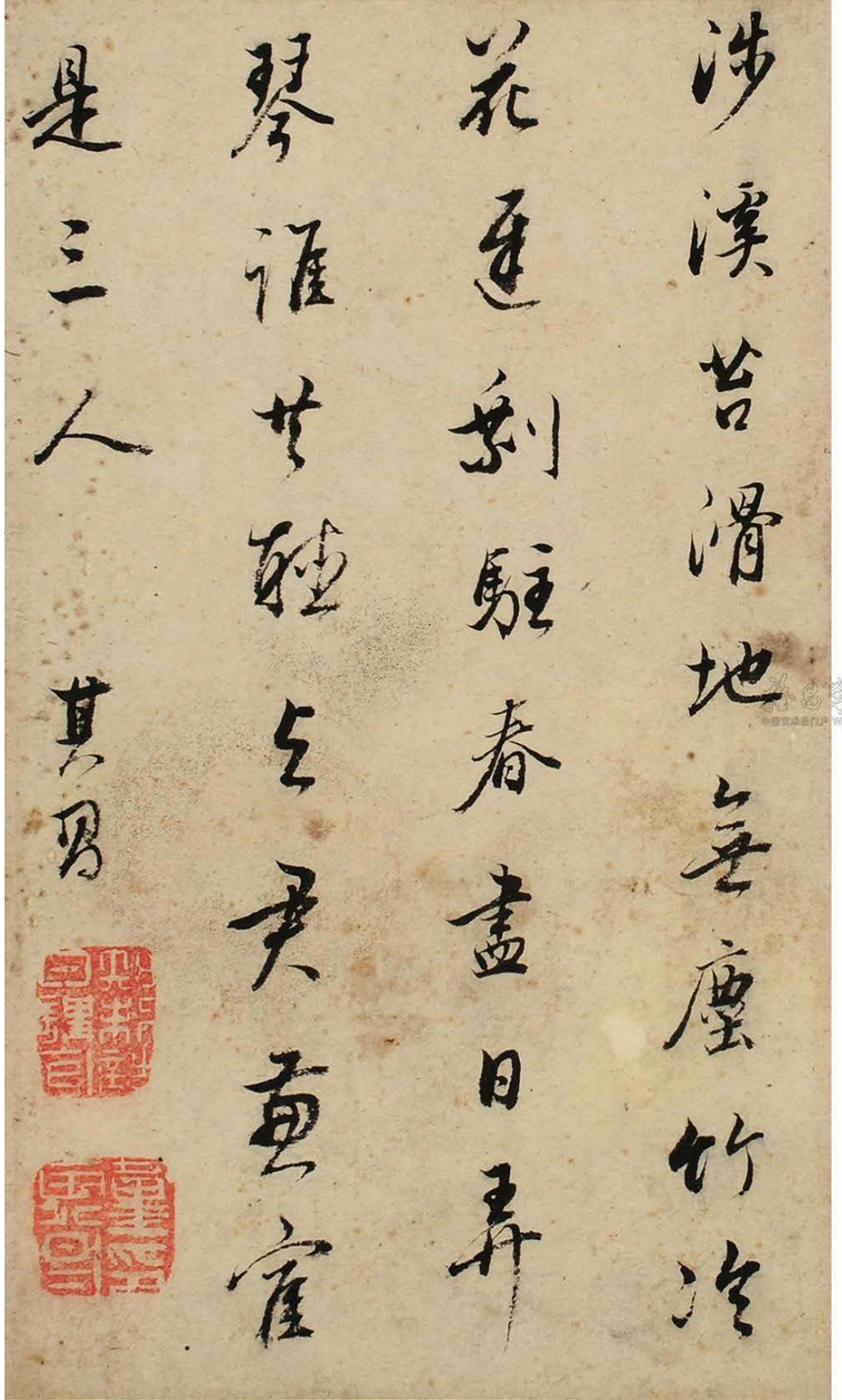
The development of Chinese mountain and water painting *shanshui hua* 山水画 naturally follows the historical and cultural evolution of China. The formation of the artistic style, genre, and language of the past dynasties of mountain and water painting was not accomplished overnight, it was inherited and developed gradually drawing on the artistic experience of predecessors and gradually forming through a long period of brush and ink practice. Every change has been inextricably linked with the predecessors, but also influences the future generations. It is an endless process. People expand in retrospect, repetitively review the old and learn the new, so the Chinese mountain and water painting is constantly enriched, developed and improved.
Shanshui hua has a long history, it is a complete system with a highly clear context.. It has provided us with incredibly rich learning resources for the teaching of mountain and water painting. From the practice of brush and ink, the cognition of theoretics, to the final completeness of both form and spirit. A rigorous style of study, meditation, and spiritual comprehension are required and goes hand in hand with equal emphasis on academic theory.
It is particularly important to cultivate artistic abilities with moral sentiment, an intellectual character, artistic spirit and brush and ink skills, to build a self-worthy system with contemporary spirit and an independent personality. Chinese mountain and water painting is based on the humanistic value orientation. When we face the traditional classics and look up the mountains, we perceive the creative ideas of *Shanshui hua*, and at the same time it contains a profound humanistic affection to borrowing things. The brush-and-ink language of expressing ideas and writing mental images enables the noumenon and creativity of art to extend, and thus creates a dialogue with the world, with an open heart and mind (xin 心), as brush and ink are things with flesh, blood and vitality.

Tradition *chuntong* 传统 can both "pass" 传 and "unify" 统, and endure for thousands of years. Of course, tradition cannot have the same face. Tradition is the indelible essence that has gone through the years. It has strong tolerance and continuity. In the vast and fertile soil of tradition, generations of mountain and water painters have been nurtured, and many artistic monuments have been erected. Tradition is worthy of our constant learning, reference and growth. The teaching of *shanshui hua* is inseparable from the process of mastering the ancients, and with a daring heart, through reproduction, sketching, creation, calligraphy, seal cutting, poetry inscriptions, and painting theory etc, it's comprehensive learning is improved, and systematic training and research are carried out. The cultivation of all levels of learning, movement skills and enlightenment is carried out step by step, and they are continuously digested, consolidated and promoted until the moral cultivation and artistic characters are gradually perfected. Dao 道, the way, consists of techniques and virtue, the two complement each other. If we are unwitting of the methods or unable to master the skills, we will lack the ability to control brush and ink .The artistic transformation of *shanshui hua* goes from the state of brush and ink, to the state of humanities, and then to the state of life; including ancient and modern, indigenous and foreign, pioneering and innovating, by constructing the ontological spirit and independent personality, building a solid foundation with deep accumulation, and fully stimulating the potential creativity, these are the first priorities when walking the path of mountain and water painting.

Understanding the relationship between the physics perception and brushwork skills of mountain and water painting - the wind, snow, rain and sun, the cold and warm of the day and night, the ever-changing heights and lows of the natural world, is to understand the variation of mountains, mists, the thickness of the woods, and the human presence in the environment. The concealment, the rapidness of the spring, the twists and turns of the road, and the expressions of the academic theory and understanding it in the language of the brush and ink, such as intensity, gentleness, severity, mildness, opening and closing, density, lushness, and gathering starts with mastering the techniques and improving the overall cultivation, to fully stimulate the creative talent under the self-consciousness.

Throughout the development of the teaching of mountain and water painting, traditional classics and old generation art educators have accumulated a large number of sketches, technical drawing books, research literature, and theoretical readings for us. They devoted their entire lives to these teachings. These painstaking efforts have become the permanent treasure of teaching today's mountain and water painting. Throughout the ages, outstanding artists and drawings of educators have been a model to our learning. The joint efforts of mountain and water painters, the unity of knowledge and action, and innovations have created a new paradigm for the development of mountain and water painting in the new era. Whether by borrowing the inheritance of the past and the present, the compatibility of Chinese and Western integration, or the innovation of seeking novelty and difference, they are all exploration and practice around the grand pattern of *shanshui hua*. Unique artistic insights, novel formal language, and rich accumulation of brush and ink, together to builds a broad intellectual vision and profound humanistic knowledge of contemporary mountain and water paintings has become a powerful driving force for diversified development.

This vast amount of material is of great importance and usefulness, also considering the fact that the pictorial and calligraphic materials: paper or silk, brush and ink have basically remained the same, therefore the techniques and practices developed from antiquity to the present day are always applicable and can always be a source of inspiration.
The same applies to the theoretical treatises that discuss the use of brush


涉溪苔滑地無塵竹冷
花遲剝驛春盡日尋
琴誰共聽空谷更無
是三人
其昌

玄宰

Dong Qichang 董其昌 (1555 – 1636), Mountain and water album leaf

and ink. Texts written a thousand or more years ago contain ideas and teachings perfectly applicable to contemporary painting practice. The speculations on the use of the brush, the various techniques created and used by the artists of the past can be resumed and modified, developed and adapted to the artistic needs of the artists of subsequent eras and these would be modified again by their successors. This type of relationship between tradition and creation (in the artist's contemporaneity), has led to an uninterrupted evolutionary flow of artistic practice for two millennia. During the different historical periods, the evolution of painting techniques has been more or less fruitful, but even in the less creative moments more linked to academic formality and a more submissive approach to tradition, there has always been great figures of artists and intellectuals who raised their voices to counter the submission and lack of creativity of their contemporaries.

The relationship with tradition is not passive, much less submissive, the artists and intellectuals of the past are innumerable, the choice of masters to refer to is up to the contemporary and to the individual, not necessarily everything that is tradition is good, high level or suited to the needs of the artist, it is necessary to establish a form of dialogue with the past, to know it, to understand it and to grasp the teachings necessary for self-cultivation and evolution.

Tradition is not like what the historical avant-gardes have made us believe, a burden that we carry and something that crushes our creativity. In the vision of Chinese artistic training, tradition is the support, the basis and the foundation that raises our creativity, since it provides the means for its expression. The tradition, being constantly updated by the intellectual artists, is increasingly rich in means. It is a theoretical and technical support that leads creativity to go beyond these teachings, not through a process of destruction and cancellation of the past that would bring the evolution back to the initial level, and therefore having to reinvent something new. At the same time we cannot limit ourselves to mere copying and theft, it is necessary to go through a process of self enrichment that would lead to manage how you use and enrich traditional means in order to express the needs of contemporaneity. One of the fundamental axioms of art is that art is life, if it ends with academicism it is only a virtuous or erudite game, a technical and intellectual practice for its own sake, which will hardly move the souls of those who come into contact with it.

Through inheritance and transmission, each subsequent generation is potentially in a richer situation than the previous one, but the field can be expanded even more if we take into consideration the traditions different from ours, which developed following different paths, but always generated by the humans occupying this planet. Different traditions with different evolution naturally lead to different systems of thoughts and values, different artistic expressions etc., but in some way they all respond to problems or express the spirit of human beings. Only those who will be able to look at traditions with their own view, study, understand and not dedicate themselves to mere collage, will find themselves in a situation much richer and potentially more stimulating, as they are enriched by new and different interpretations and elaborations of the world.
Naturally it is not enough to know the foreign or the past, but a sensitivity from the artist's side is needed for him to understand and enrich himself; copying, theft, borrowing, leads only to empty shells that are not even worth considering. Only those who are inspired can create something new and valuable, something that gives broader answers or asks questions never asked. In these terms, the tradition or traditions have great value for the evolution of the arts, of man, and of the world.

Dong Qichang, *Imitating Mi Fu* 《仿米芾山水图》 104. 5x53. 1

Shen Zhou, *Lofty Mount Lu* 193.8x98.1

Wang Meng, *Dwelling in Reclusion in the Bian Mountain* 《青卞隐居图》 140.6×42.2

Shen Zhou 沈周 **(1427-1509)** ***Lofty Mount Lu, Lushan gao tu*** 《庐山高图》

Shen Zhou's landscape paintings uses the unique vigor of the northern style to express the beauty and the charm of the southern landscape, so that the north and south styles are organically integrated, and they benefit and complement each other.
Lofty Mount Lu, is of special significance. In the painting there are lofty mountains and ridges, which recalls Wang Meng's 王蒙 (1308-1385) brushwork and structure, depicting dangerous peaks, tall pine and giant trees, with majestic and magnificent mountains. The whole brush and ink look solid and vigorous, the scenery is lush and magnificent. Shen Zhou follows the way of the brushwork of Wang Meng, even though he is more fresh and ethereal. It integrates the "noble" artistic character ideal with the magnificent nature, in order to reveal the painter's mind.
The brushwork of the mountains, stones, forests and trees in the painting are all imitated by Wang Meng, benefiting from his own skill, it feels more primitive and vigorous. The mountains and stones are fused with Wang Meng's texture methods: ravelled ropes *jiesuo cun* 解索皴 and ox hair *niumao cun* 牛毛皴 texture methods. The mountains and slopes were first modelled with hemp-fiber texture *pima cun* 披麻皴 strokes and tinted with light ink, to which layers of dark ink were added to build up the slopes. The mists and the colouring of the mountains are particularly luminous.
Lofty Mount Lu mainly draws on the essence of Wang Meng's brushwork and expresses the vigorous atmosphere of the famous mountain. The layout of the whole painting is full of charm, the setting is lofty and profound, meticulous and complicated. Throughout the whole picture, although it is mainly light colours, the wonderful effects of the five colours of ink, charred *jiao* 焦, concentrated *nong* 浓, light *dan* 淡, wet *shi* 湿 and dry *gan* 干, have been shown in full.
This painting clearly recalls to Wang Meng techniques, is a clear example of how a post generation artist looks at tradition, makes it his own, reinterprets it and proposes it again, directly paying homage to a master of the past with a great work.

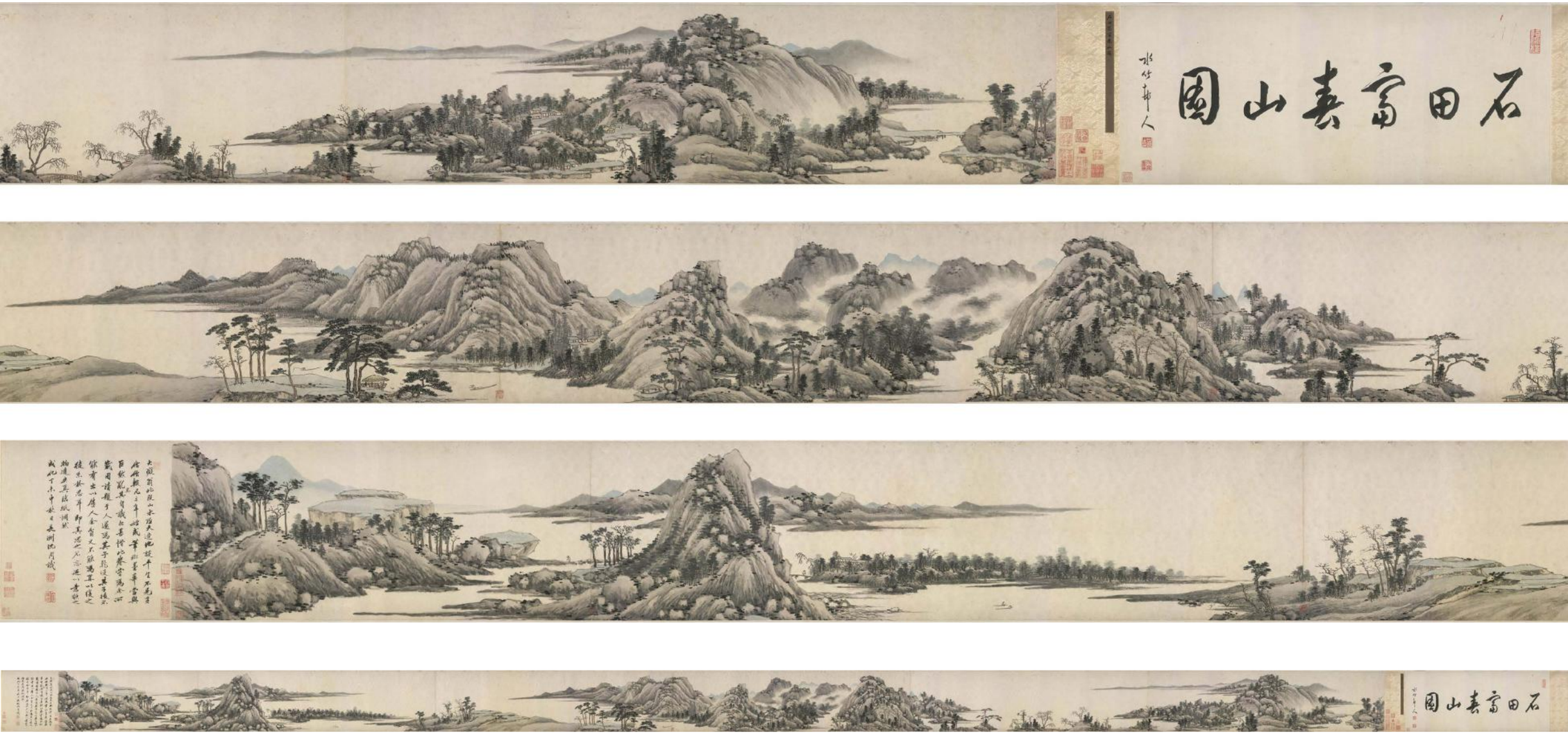
Picasso (1881-1973) and African Art

A smell of mould and neglect caught me by the throat. I was so depressed that I would have chosen to leave immediately. But I forced myself to stay, to examine these masks, all these objects that people had created with a sacred, magical purpose, to serve as intermediaries between them and the unknown, hostile forces surrounding them, attempting in that way to overcome their fears by giving them colour and form. And then I understood what painting really meant. It's not an aesthetic process; it's a form of magic that interposes itself between us and the hostile universe, a means of seizing power by imposing a form on our terrors as well as on our desires. The day I understood that, I had found my path.

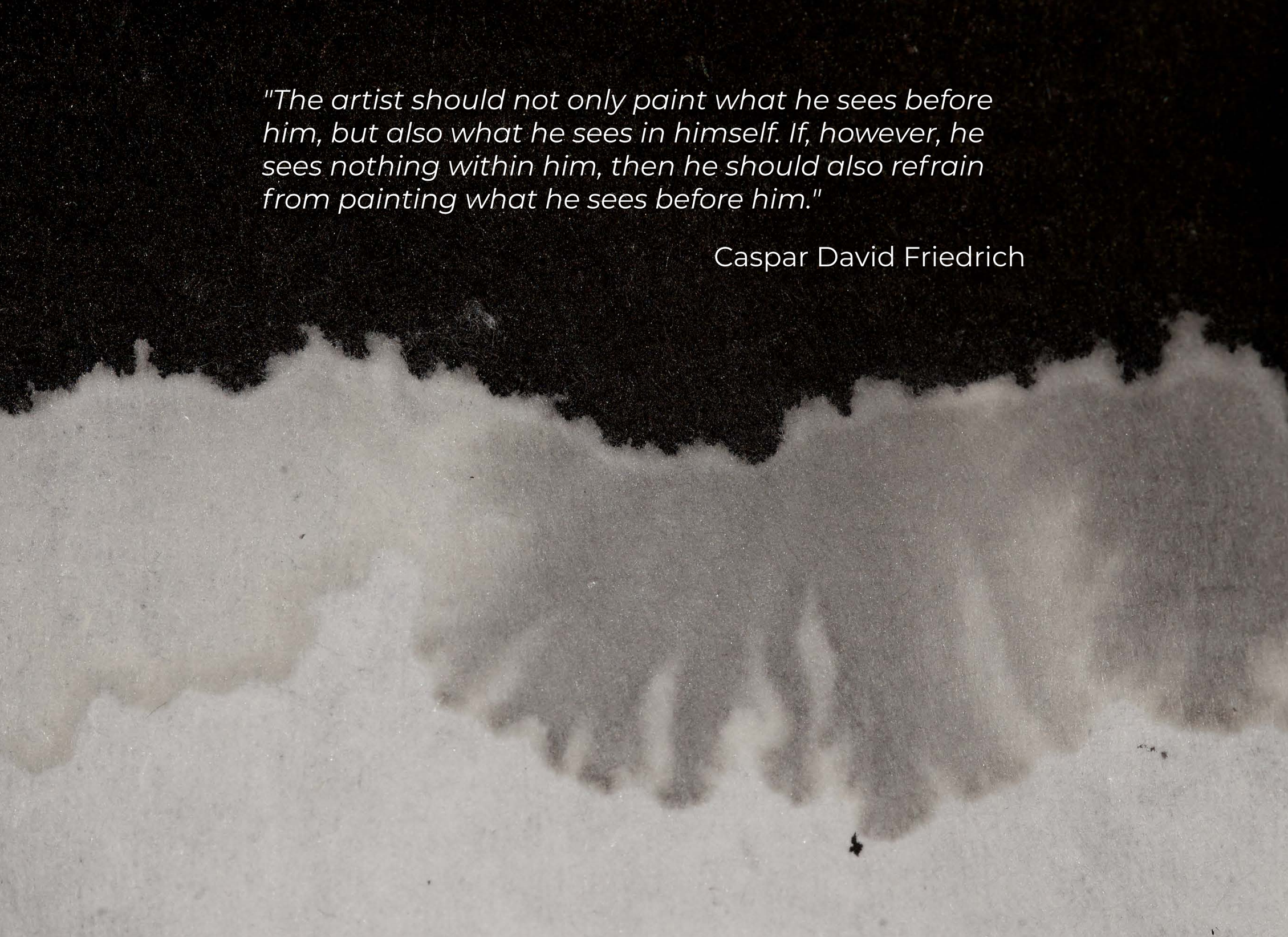
Left: *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*
Right*: African Mask*

Picasso is one of the most celebrated examples of artists influenced by traditions outside his own.
In the spring of 1907, Picasso was visiting Gertrude Stein, the famous American writer, when Henry Matisse also visited him with an African sculpture he had just bought. Picasso was fascinated by the shape of the human figure in that sculpture.
A few days after visiting Gertrude Stein, Picasso went to the Trocadero Ethnological Museum, now Musée de l'Homme, with his friend André Derain. Picasso later stated that this visit was crucial for his training as an artist. This was the beginning of the important "black period" and in a certain sense also of Cubism, in fact what is traditionally considered Picasso's first Cubist work, *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* (1907), bears the sign of the influence of 'African art, it shows the deformation of the faces that assume an angular and geometric shape, remarkably similar to some African masks.

Picasso was not the only one to visit the exhibition or to come into contact with African art, only he painted *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*. During that time, only he (and Matisse) had the sensitivity to be influenced and grasp a new vision.



Shen Zhou, *Imitation of Huang Gongwang's Dwelling in the Fuchun Mountains* 《仿黄公望富春山居图》


"The artist should not only paint what he sees before him, but also what he sees in himself. If, however, he sees nothing within him, then he should also refrain from painting what he sees before him."
Caspar David Friedrich

Lin Haizhong 林海钟, discourses on Chinese painting

Editor; Giacomo Bruni

Lin Haizhong, other names include, 'Master of the Rivers and Stream Pavilion' 林泉阁主人, 'Man who lies in the Red Mountain Clouds' 卧霞山人, is currently a full time professor of Chinese Mountain and Water Painting in the department of Chinese Painting and Calligraphy at the China Academy of Art in Hangzhou 中国美术学院. In addition to being a highly accomplished and recognized artist, Haizhong also serves as Supervisor to both Masters and Doctoral students of the Academy. Lin Haizhong is deeply focused on fostering and passing down the authentic tradition of Chinese Painting. Further, he also searches to find new meaning in its use and development. His work presents an expression of the ancient meeting contemporary consciousness. In addition, his paintings establish a realm that is both unadorned with ancient simplicity, quietness, caracterized by raw and spontaneous movement. His works also breathe an expression of the current day. There is an endless aesthetic joyfulness and boundless power to his works' spiritual achievement.

谈 “传移摹写”

On *Chuanyi moxie* The Method of “Transmission and Copying”

如何来认识绘画？绘画到底是什么？虽然我一直在中国美院从事教学与绘画实践，学画也差不多有近30年的时间了，好像学了很多东西，如技法、画史、画论等等，但仍然不太明白。这几年回过头来，回到最根本的问题：绘画到底是什么？中国画是怎么回事？山水画是怎么回事？学生们也经常问：“您怎么看中国画？好的中国画用什么标准评判？”。这些问题都是特别朴素的问题，但是有时候我真的一下子不知道怎么去回答。前段时间，我给学生讲临摹，讲到绘画“六法”里面的“传移摹写”，很有感触，觉得很多最朴素的问题在“六法”的“传移摹写”中已经说清楚了。以前我只把“传移摹写”理解成临摹的概念，要学习绘画，中国人是从临摹先人作品开始的，临摹是学习绘画的捷径。但是现在说“传移摹写”就是临摹，就没那么简单了，应该有更深刻的含义在里面；但是我以前没有留意到。

How do we understand the act of *painting*? What exactly is *painting*? I have been engaged in teaching and painting practice at the China Academy of Art for almost 30 years. It would appear that I have learned some things along the lines of technique, painting history, and theory. However, I still don’t have quite a clear picture. Looking back over the past few years, I return to the most fundamental questions: What is painting? What is Chinese painting? What is Mountain and Water (*Shanshui*) painting? Students often ask me such questions, “What is your understanding of Chinese painting? What kind of criteria should one use to judge a *good* Chinese painting?” These are elementary and straightforward questions, but sometimes I genuinely do not know how to answer them! Some time ago, I taught my students about *linmo* 临摹 (the practice of observing and making close studies from masterworks). In discussing this subject, I spoke about the concept of *Chuanyi moxie* 传移摹写 (transmitting and copying or imitating) discussed in *Liufa* 六法 the “Six Methods” or “Procedures.” This gave me an epiphany. I realized that many of the issues I sought to understand had already been clarified in this fundamental principle. In the past, I only understood “transmitting and copying” as to mean the act or practice of copying. In China, when learning to paint, one often starts by copying the works of his or her ancestors. Copying is seen as a shortcut to learning painting. However, now in thinking about the term “transmitting and copying,” I believe it is not that simple and has a deeper meaning, but I hadn’t paid attention before.

首先说 “传”

“传”的意味很深刻。起初，我觉得“传”就是学习临本，其实不尽然。“传”应该是传统， 是规律。形式上可能就是古画本，实际在其中传递着绘画之道。传统是什么是？是绘画规律，是品格，是认知，是古人与道的契合。什么东西能够流传下来？就是古人的真知灼见，或者说是他们对于山水的最根本的知见，这是我们后人应该“传”的。比如说“六法”中，“骨法用笔”是绘画的规律，是可以传的；“气韵生动”也是“传”，“六法”本身就是“传”。

“Transmit” *chuán* 传

“To Transmit” in this sense has a very profound meaning. Initially, I thought that *chuán* meant to learn from copying the original paintings, but this is entirely false. *Chuán* refers to 'passing down a *continuous system*' and to 'laws.' In terms of the form this might take, it may just be an ancient painting, but what such a painting actually conveys is the method of painting. What is Chuantong (often translated as 'tradition,' but literally meaning, passing down a continuous system, "pass" 传 and "unify" 统)? It refers to the painting's rules and order, quality or character, underlying consciousness, and the link between the ancients and the path to higher understanding. What can be *passed down*? It is the profound wisdom and insight of the ancients or their most fundamental knowledge concerning depicting mountains and waters. These aspects are what we as descendants should "pass" or continue to transmit down to our posterity. For example, "the 'Bone Method' of using the brush" 骨法用笔. This represents a rule or procedure of painting that can be transmitted; "[Engendering] a sense of Spirit Consonance" 气韵生动 is also a means of *chuán* or *passing down*. Finally, the "Six Methods" themselves are also such a heritage that can be transmitted or passed down, *chuán*.

其次说 “移”

古人这个“移”字用得好，其妙无穷。“移”是移情，是方法什么东西能够让你移情，因为这个传统太好了，“移”能让学画者真正地进入传统，与它相应，并得到传承，太妙了我曾经和朋友聊到一个日本人，他是京都艺术大学古画复制专业的教授。我跟他聊天，听他说得很精彩，对我很有启发。他说单纯地复制古画是很没有意思的，但是能和古代作品相融合，那是一种享受。他复制古画的时候，从里面发现了很多新的东西。他说摹古不是那么简单的，照着样儿把它临下来，这里面非常有意思。他说得很陶醉，我觉得他得了“传移摹写”的真谛。好作品的确能够让人移情。当时，我想到了曾经读到过的一段关于学琴的故事：老师对学生说，“我教不了你了，我去把我的老师请出来教你。”然后把学生带到海边，老师就划着

船出去请他的老师了。第一天没有回来，第二天还是没有回来，到第三天的时候，学生面对大海开始出现“移情”的状态，再弹琴的时候突然就开悟了；其实这种移情是古代非常重要的学习方法。传统对于我们来说是一个谜。用移情的方法去感知、去参求，是有可能与之契合的，这个方法很妙。所以，我当时读了故事就很有启发，因为道出了能够言说的，更有一种不能言说的东西道不出来，那用“移”的方法来学习，这真是我们古人的智慧啊。

"Shift, Move" yí 移

The ancients used the word *yí* well, and it is certainly a term that encourages endless consideration. *Yí* is *empathy* 移情. It is a method or means that can make one *empathize*. For example, because this tradition is so excellent, the concept of yí allows painters to truly *enter into* the practice, corresponding to it and inheriting and transmitting it themselves. It is marvelous. I once spoke to a Japanese friend, who is a professor specializing in painting reproductions at the Kyoto University of Art. We chatted, and I listened to his brilliant story and was very inspired. He said that simply copying ancient paintings is extremely meaningless, but harmonizing oneself with ancient works is a kind of enjoyment.
When he used to copy ancient paintings, he found many new things in them. He said that copying the ancients is not as easy as it seems, and it is significant to copy the works of the ancients down precisely as they are. He spoke in an intoxicating manner, and I believe that he has found the true meaning and essence of “transmitting and copying.” Good works can indeed engender *empathy*. At that time, I thought of a story that I once read about a student

Lin Haizhog, *Xinguo sketch album* 《兴国写生册》

learning how to play the *qin* 琴. The teacher said to his student, “I can no longer teach you. I will ask my teacher to teach you.” Then he took the student to the beach and took a boat to ‘go get’ his teacher. However, on the first and second day, he did not return. By the third day, the student, facing the sea, began to “empathize” with the situation, and when he played his instrument again, he suddenly became enlightened. In fact, during ancient times, this empathy was an essential learning method. Tradition is very elusive to us. However, it is possible
to use empathy to perceive and participate and align oneself with it. This method is profound. So, when I read this story, I was inspired because it told me that some things can be put into words. But more things cannot be put into words and expressed. For this reason, it is vital to use the method *yí* to learn. This is really the wisdom of our ancients.

再次说 “摹”

“摹”就是传统感召之下的心摹手追。其实摹写的过程即是一个印证的过程，达到心手相印。学到的东西，时而习之，能有部分相契合，契合之处就是我们得到处，不亦乐乎。“传移摹写”是学习中国画的心法；当你能够心摹手追，去感知所学并与之相呼应的时候，当你能够运用“传移摹写”的心法时，你的心得也就自然而然流淌出来了。

“Copy” *mó* 摹

Mó is the diligent process of imitation under the guidance and calling of tradition. In fact, copying is a confirmation process, reaching the mutual trace of the mind and the hand. When we learn, we must constantly put what we have learned (intellectually) into practice. If we can do so, even if only in a small part, we will find great satisfaction in that small art of implementation. "Transfering and copying" represent parts of the most direct method, *Xinfa* 心法, of learning Chinese painting. When our mental observation can finally align with our hands, we will find harmony with all that we have learned. When we can use the method of *Chuanyi moxie* "transmitting and copying," directly, all that we have learned will naturally flow out.

最后说 “写”

中国画讲究“用笔”，这一点在其他画种里都没有涉及，这反映了中国画的高度。中国人讲究用笔是抓住了绘画的关键，是将开启画道之门的钥匙紧紧地抓在画者手里。而西方人对于用笔的理解只是停留在“笔触”的概念。中国人认为画是因笔而成的，提出“骨法用笔”，这对笔法的提出，又是一个高度。中国人认为画画必须要懂得笔法，甚至认为画画是有笔顺的，就像写字那样是有笔顺的，一幅画的笔顺和气象代表了画家的生命气象，这是非常高妙的认识。西方人很晚才认识到绘画“笔触”的美感，特别是印象派，但是还远没有达到我们古人的这种认知高度。而中国古人对画中气韵的认知就更高了。

综上所述，我认为，以“传移摹写”的方式去承接传统的气脉很重要，是很重要的学画方法中国的中医和武学都是有传承的、而中国的书画传承在什么地方？好像断了一样，传统成为未解之谜，需要我们

去参悟。如何来参？有很多方法，各有心得。我论说传承，讲“传移摹写”，并不是否认创新，只是不去专门谈论这个问题，因为不能和绘画之道真正契合来谈“创新”，其实都是空谈。不管是“师古人”或者“师造化”、“师己心”或者“创新”，都是我们的传统，都是方法和途径，并不是我们的目的；我们的目的是如何通过这些途径真正地明白和印证绘画之道，传承和接续先人的文脉。我希望将来我们的同行朋友和不同行朋友，都是同道，希望我们能有一天通达了，开悟了，明白了，悟道了，成为真正的和大道相契合的人。

"Write, depict" *xiě* 写

Chinese painting requires a careful study of learning to use the brush 用笔, which is absent in other painting traditions. Such a fact reflects Chinese painting's sophistication. Chinese people reckon that achieving good brushwork is to grasp the crux of painting. It is like holding a key firmly in your hands. However, in the western canon, understandings of brushwork only care about "the mark." Chinese believe that paintings are made by the brush and propose using "the 'Bone Method' in one's brushwork. This represents another point of sophistication. Chinese believe that to paint, it is fundamental to understand the use of the brush, and even believe that painting has to follow stroke order, just like writing characters. The stroke order and atmosphere of a painting have a direct correspondence to that of a painter. This is a very nuanced understanding. In the West, the realization of the beauty and significance of "the mark" made via the brushstroke in painting happened very late. More particularly, this was the discovery of the Impressionists. Even so, such discovery pales in comparison to what is understand about brushwork in ancient China. The ancient Chinese had an acute awareness of the spiritual resonance and character in a painting.

In summary, it is imperative to inherit the line of thoughts of the tradition by "transferring and copying". It is a critical way to learn painting. Like painting, Chinese medicine and martial arts are also inherited traditions. What is does Chinese painting and calligraphy inherent exactly? As if broken, this inheritance has become a mystery to us, so we need to seek it out and comprehend it. How to do so? There are many methods, each with its own understanding. When I talk about imparting and inheriting and "transferring and copying," I am not denying innovation. However, my focus is not on innovation because "Innovation" is not part of the painting methods we are discussing and is a somewhat empty topic. Whether we are talking about "learning from the ancients" 师古人 or "learning from the source of creation (Nature)" 师造化" or learning from one's own mind/heart, "师己心" all such methods belong to our tradition and are methods and approaches to be implemented. These are not our primary goals. Our main goals are to use such tools to clarify and attain the path of great painting. Also, to continue to spiritual lifeblood of the ancients. I hope that our colleagues and friends will have the same goals in the future and walk the same path. I hope that we will all be on the same path one day, our minds open, understanding, and enlightened, and people who have found true harmony with the Dao 道.

Arahat《大阿罗汉图》 143.5×75.5

Hidden Traces of Lakes and Mountains 湖山隐迹
——The Landscape 'Mountain/Water' 山水 **and Culture of the West Lake, (Summer, 2013) Talk given at the Center for Chinese Culture, Paris, France**
——西湖的山水与文化，巴黎中国文化中心

Translated by; Michael Cavayero

Some Notes:
On the culture of "yǐn" 隐, meaning: hidden, secret, private, concealed—also meaning a kind of hermitic pilgrimage or retreat into the wilderness or life of solitude:
Historically, in China, obtaining an official position was one of life's most important goals. However, for many, such a path was impossible to achieve. In ancient China, once this path became closed off to an individual, life would present that individual with a different option or experience. This is called "yǐn," and this existential expression, state of mind or understanding, slowly became a culture.
In the yin culture, everything is seen as transient and empty, even fame and fortune. Finally, in the end, all returns to dust! In China, the concept, culture, and spirit of yin mainly developed because of such conditions. However, once the yin lifestyle developed into a recognized cultural presence in China, its existence flourished and became something positive. Those who practiced a yin lifestyle perhaps hid in the mountains and forests or in the city. Maybe they hid in activities of Calligraphy and painting or by living peripatetically. In general, those who sought yin or the reclusive life had no fixed place and presented a free state of being.
In China, those who attain a higher level of consciousness or enlightenment are referred to as 'Men of Dao 道. Their starting point always begins with yin or this expression of retreat and solitude. In China, we call this state of mind 'to see clearly through the mortal life.' This is an idiom also used by many Buddhist monks. Those who achieve this type of consciousness or practice place themselves at an extreme. Thus they achieve great wisdom; enlightenment.

The Landscape (Mountain and Waters)

This is the city where I live —— Hangzhou!

I call it a city where you can live in yin or seek such a state of mind. In the south of China, the landscape is poised and graceful; it has the reputation of being heaven on earth. Hangzhou was once was the ancient capital of China during the Southern Song dynasty. Today, it is no longer the center of China's political culture; it is also not China's leading business center. It is far away from politics. Today, there are many cities in China, far away from the political center. However, there is only one city that has the West Lake 西湖, which is Hangzhou.

Hangzhou has a profound cultural history. It is endlessly flourishing. Once serving as China's ancient capital in the Southern Song Dynasty, it is a microcosm, a 'heaven on Earth'. The West Lake is its emblem. Today the West Lake is still that same vision as it was during the Southern Song Dynasty. We can see this from the painting by Li Song李嵩 *West Lake* 《西湖图》. He painted the West Lake surrounded by mountains on three sides, and today it is just the same.

The China Academy of Art - Qingbo Bridge Studio
中国美术学院 – 清波桥画室

This place is quiet and beautiful beyond words. Its beauty is penetrating. When people visit this studio, they become deeply awed. I don't know how I have such an affinity to work here. I also don't know what the future will bring.....

Du Rusong 杜如松, is a Flutist with a magnanimous, heroic spirit. Masterful with the flute, he plays, *The Partridge Bird Flies*《鹧鸪飞》. He has unique talent. One day he came to visit me and told me this sentence:

I lived in the remoteness of the Qiantang River and its blissful open feeling,

I stared into the mountain and heard the spring, the sound of its tide,

All day I did nothing,

The moon came down, the clouds draped upon the sky and sounded with a smile.

幽居钱塘惬野情

观山听泉海潮音

终日无事弄一管

月下披云笑一声

I was incredibly moved. I could feel the sentence. It was an expression of high resonance; also, it possessed the feeling of a painting.
Because of this, I decided I wanted to

Li Song, *West Lake* 26.7x 85 cm

The Great Sight of Qian Tang River 250cmx1200cm

create *Qian Tang River Seclusion* 《钱塘幽居图》 just to join in on the fun and excitement of Du's flute music. After about several months, my former senior classmate, Yan Shanchun 严善醇, came to Hangzhou and wanted to do a brush and ink project that could be passed on and exhibited. Thus we came up with the idea to do a big painting, 250 cm by 1200 cm, about ten large screens in total. One day I would paint on the wall and look and it. It had a vast and wide quality stretching far into the distance, a solid and expressive power. My close friend Fan Yimin 范一民 came over one day and gasped at its 'big sight'大观. Thus the painting's name became *The Great Sight of Qian Tang River* 《钱塘大观图》

Ling Yin Monastery
灵隐寺

During the Southern Song dynasty on one side of the West Lake was an exquisite court life and bustling residential district; on the other side, were faintly discernible Daoist temples and Buddhist monasteries. During that period Hangzhou was known as the "Buddhist Center of the Southeast."东南佛国.

济公 **Ji Gong**
The work started in 2009/10/12. After two years of research and production on Ling Yin's Daoji Ji Gong Hall mural project 灵隐寺济公殿壁画创, on 2011/9/7, the first stage of production was complete. Thus we began the process of installing and opening the project up to the public. The 18 murals are 3.16 meters high and nearly 2.8 meters wide, and the total length of the 18 murals connected together is 50 meters.

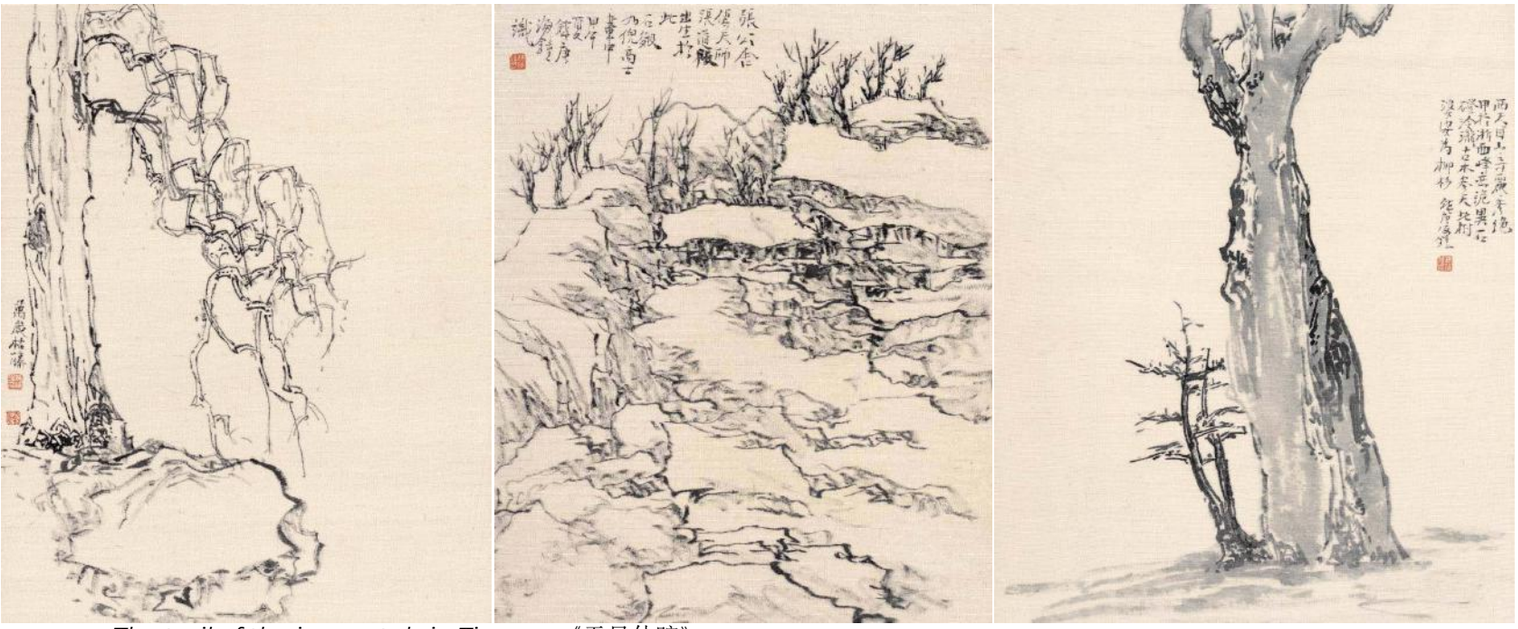
The process of the work of *Daoji Ji Gong Hall mural*

Six sections of *Daoji Ji Gong Hall mural*

Tianmu Shan (Heaven's Eye Mountain) 天目山

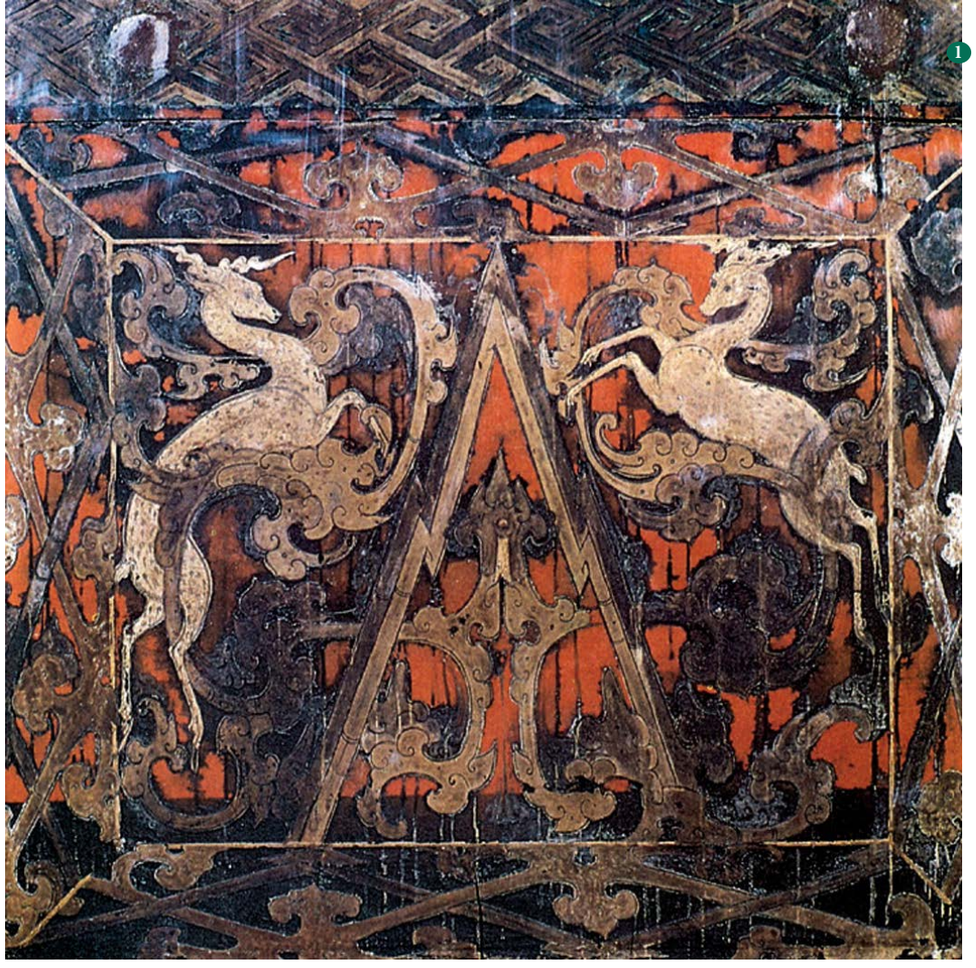
The flourishing of 'Chan painting' 禅画 has a very close connection to the West Lake. The Southern Song dynasty's Mu Xi 牧溪 is the main representative painter of the Liu Tong Monastery School 六通寺画派.
Those enlightened men, in China we refer to them as 'Men of 'Dao'道人. They begin by choosing the path of yin. In China, we refer to this state of mind as 'seeing through the world of the mortals'看破红尘. One places oneself in a position of 'otherness' and attains wisdom from this.

Mu Xi *Fisherman in the Glow of the Setting Sun*《漁村夕照图》34x112, the surviving section of the classic work *Eight Views of Xiangxiang* 《潇湘八景残卷》



The trail of the immortals in Tianmu 《天目仙踪》

Snow on Tianmu《天目雪》



The Image Colour in Chinese Painting

By; Ning Lizheng 宁立正, *Feng Fengju* 冯凤举

Colour is an inherent attribute of nature and also one of the basic languages of painting. It is used to show the artistic style of the picture and to express and convey the artist's emotion. Colour does not exist only in Western paintings, it also attracts Chinese people in painting in many aspects. In the history of Chinese art, as early as 10,000 years ago, in the Neolithic Age, China had many painted pottery patterns, silk paintings existed in the Warring States 战国 period and murals in Han and Wei Tomb 汉魏墓 (fig.1). All those artistic creations are colourful. During the period of Wei and Jin 魏晋 dynasties, Buddhism spread eastward and grotto statues prevailed. The colourful Mogao Grottoes 莫高窟 in Dunhuang 敦煌 have become one of the largest art treasures in the art history of the world. The application of heavy colours for Jinbi Mountain and Water painting 金碧山水画 of Sui and Tang Dynasty 隋唐 was neat, refined and rich. The Flower and Bird Painting 花鸟画 was mature. Especially, Huang Quan's 黄筌 (about 903-965) flower and bird paintings were dazzling. The traditional Chinese painting has formed an extraordinary rich colour system in its continuous practice.

With the development of human civilization, people have different views on colour, forming different colour concepts in China and the West. The colour of Western painting comes from the natural scientific cognition of the world, which is based on the visual experience. In art, it is expressed as the reproduction of the objective world. The early formation of colour system before the Song Dynasty宋代 in China was based on the original colours. Later, the Ink and Wash Painting 水墨画 in Song Dynasty gradually became the mainstream of Chinese painting. And the rise of literati landscape painting carried on a bold innovation on the colour language of the traditional Chinese painting in the process of "being refined", forming a unique colour system mainly depending on black and white. In Chinese painting, painters pay more attention to the expression of their own emotions. The colours in paintings do not aim to restore or imitate anything, but to express something. It is the image colour from a mysterious colour view of dialogue between human and nature.

1 .The colour view of the traditional Chinese painting

Different from the scientific view of colour in the Western classical paintings, the Chinese colour culture, with a mysterious philosophy, is enveloped in the traditional philosophy of image aesthetic category, paying attention to vivid portrayal, to paint from real objects and to establish images to express emotions.

1.1. Philosophical soil

The use of colours in Chinese painting is inclined to subjectivity with its unique historical culture and philosophical soil. Confucianism in the pre-Qin period 先秦时期 explained the traditional "rites and music" with rational spirit. In terms of the cognition of colour, it affirmed the subjective character of the objective existence of colour. Confucius and Zi Xia子夏 (507-420) had a wonderful dialogue as a proof:

"The light smiling face so pretty, the black-and-white distinction eyes so beautiful, like a splendid picture on the blank paper, how to understand all these?" The Master said, "The blank paper first, then colour on it."

巧笑倩兮，美目盼兮，素以为绚兮，何谓也？”子曰：“绘事后素。[1]

The woman smiles really sweet with bright eyes because she makes up with the plain powder. The plain silk was ready first, and then the image of a beautiful woman was painted on it. The whole painting was a perfect combination of the image and the plain silk. In other words, there is no need to copy the colour of the aesthetic object when painting, but arranging the colours subjectively according to the needs of the picture.

1.2. The combination of colour and ink

Lao Zhuang's philosophy advocated plain simplicity, opposed to gorgeous luxuries. His mysterious belief was that "painting is the image from the mind, and colour is the sound from

1 Confucius, *The Analects of Confucius,* the Spring and Autumn Period（孔子，论语，春秋）

the heart" 画为心象，色为心声[2]. The sayings "Various colours make people blind" 五色令人目盲[3] and "colourless painting makes colourful" 无色而五色成焉[4] remind people to get rid of the luxuriant colours of the surface of the object image, with the style of simplicity to express one's innocence in the creation of art. Therefore, in ancient China, black was a popular colour for a long time. But in Chinese painting, ink is not only regarded as black. It is separated into five different colours. The change of intensity in ink is the change of colour. However, in ancient China, with ink, painters expressed the essence of natural images in landscape paintings. Whereas painted pottery, tomb murals, lacquer paintings, Buddhist sculptures, figure paintings, flower-and-bird paintings and New Year pictures took brilliant colours as the main style, different from ink and wash paintings.

1.3. The integration of calligraphy and painting

The concept of brush and ink in Chinese painting appeared after calligraphy consciously intervened in painting. During the Wei and Jin dynasties, literati and scholar-officials combined aesthetic taste with various types of characters. Since then the calligraphy flourished. The use of calligraphy in the Chinese painting reduced the status of colour to some extent. Most of the ancient literati and painters had a preference for the implication, simplicity, freshness, lightness; they were painting with clear and simple colours, being immune to the ordinary world in order to see themselves as being high quality and extraordinary. After the introduction of Buddhism to the Eastern Han Dynasty东汉, some painters pursued the Chan (Zen) idea禅意 and advocated the use of Chan in colour. "Colour does not differ from emptiness. Emptiness does not differ from colour. Colour is emptiness. And emptiness is colour." 色不异空，空不异色，色即是空，空即是色.[5] The connotation of colour is richer and its extension is broader. (fig.2)

1.4. Colour according to the objects

In his "Six Approaches" *liufa*六法, Xie He谢赫 (479-502) in the Southern Dynasty 南朝 put forward the "colour according to the objects" 随类赋彩, which cannot be simply understood as "colour" according to the absolute colour of the objects. The so-called "object" should be understood as similarity or approximates. It emphasizes that the painter should observe the essence and spirit of objective figures comprehensively, so as to blend things with myself, then create a unique colour realm with the artist's imagination.

2. The modern expansion of the concept of the use of colour in the traditional Chinese painting

The relationship between ink and colour in the Chinese painting has been debated continuously since ancient times. Some people advocate emphasizing ink over colour, while oth-

2 Lü Shaoying, *Interpretation of the Colour Image in Chinese Painting,* Friends of Fine Arts, 2009 (1) （吕少英,《解读中国画色彩的意象》，《美术之友》2009年第1期）

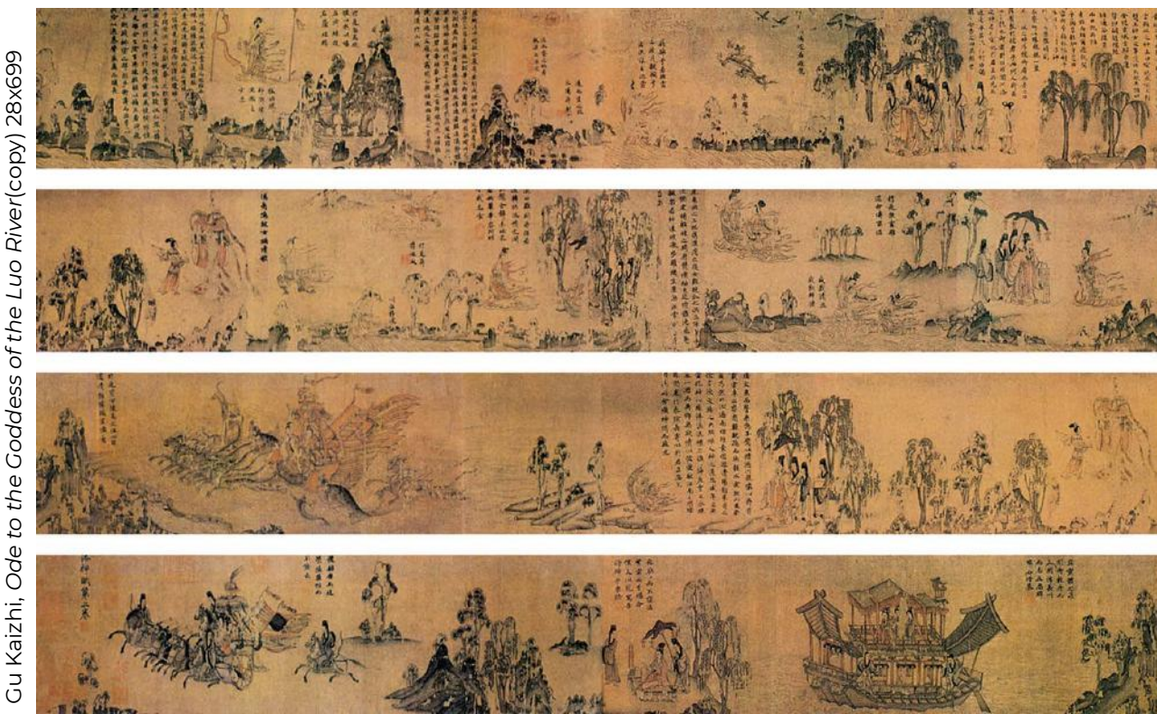
3 Lao Dan(Lao Zi), *Tao De Jing,* The Spring and Autumn Period （老聃 老子《道德经》春秋）

4 Lao Dan(Lao Zi), *Tong Xuan Zhenjing,* the Spring and Autumn Period （老聃 老子《通玄真经》，春秋）

5 Dharma Master Xuan Zang, *Prajna Heart Sutra*, Tang Dynasty （玄奘法师《般若心经》 唐）

Gu Kaizhi 顾恺之 *Ode to the Goddess of the Luo River* 《洛神赋图》(copy) 21x573

2



Gu Kaizhi, *Ode to the Goddess of the Luo River*(copy) 28x699

ers advocate emphasizing colour over ink. It is difficult to tell which judgment is more superior. At the end of the Qing Dynasty 清朝, Western painting ideas had a great impact on the inherent concept of the Chinese painting colour. Painters were at a loss and they tried to make a deep exploration of the Western painting, and tried to introduce the western concept of colour into Chinese painting. And gradually, the concept of colour of Chinese painting did broaden.

2.1.Choosing ink over colour

Dong Qichang 董其昌 (1555-1636) in Qing Dynasty advocated the use of ink, clear, clean, mild, simple, light, with green colour, plain and elegant. “The rhyme is born from light painting”, “Traces can be hardly seen when colour is used slightly.” (fig.3) Zou Yigui 邹一桂 (1686-1772) in Qing Dynasty advocated maintaining the transparency of ink, believing that too much rendering would weaken the transparency of the ink and brush, the personality and the interest of the painting. He once said: "Colour should be light rather than heavy. Because if it is heavy, it will be sluggish and ineffective, sticky but unsmooth."

2.2. Paying equal attention to colour and ink

Sheng Da Shi 盛大士 (1771-1836) of the Qing Dynasty advocated the complementarity of ink and colour. He believed that the combination of large area moistening and concentration of ink and colour. While maintaining

3

Dong Qichang, *Mountain and water* 《山水》 21.2x13

the expression of ink and brush, heavily painted in some parts, strengthen the visual contrast effect of colour and ink, so as to achieve the perfect unity of the two effects of large ink and partial pure colour. Zhang Daqian 张大千 (1899-1983) travelled around the world and once discussed art with Picasso. He was known as the "Oriental Brush" in the western art circle. Though he learned from the ancient world, he never imitated it, and continuously innovated on the basis of inheriting the tradition. In the aspect of colour, Zhang Daqian learned the original colour of the objects but didn’t copy them. Instead, he made full use of the texture effect formed by water, ink and colour on the Xuan paper 宣纸 with great passion. He used colour according to the type of image and even the “pleasure”. He created the art of splashing colour and the splashing colour and ink, and opened up a new form of art (fig.4).

2.3.The Combination of the Chinese and the Western paintings

In some of his paintings, Ren Bonian 任伯年 (1840-1895, fig.5), a Shanghai painter in the late Qing Dynasty, obviously absorbed the colour techniques of the Western art. He stressed on the contrast of colours and the treatment of colour tones, and integrated the inherent colour concept of Chinese paintings from the environmental colours of the Western paintings, thus making the colours of the Chinese paintings richer.

Ren Bonian, *Oriole on the Wistaria* 《紫藤小鸟》 31x153

5

2.4. Contemporary Practice

From the works of a large number of outstanding contemporary Chinese painters such as Lin Fengmian 林风眠 (1900-1991, fig.6), Li Keran 李可染 (1907-1989, fig.7), Wu Guanzhong 吴冠中 (1919-2010, fig.8), painters of Lingnan Painting School 岭南画派 and painters of Lijiang Painting School 漓江画派, we can see the exploration and expression of the relationship between colour and ink has reached a certain height and depth.

Lin Fengmian often depicted gorgeous subjects in heavy colours. Li Keran, taking nature as his teacher, visited Guilin桂林 many times to explore the relationship between sunshine and ink. And for the first time the concept of the emphasis light in the Western painting was introduced to the Chinese painting. Wu Guanzhong advocated that the colour of the brush and ink should serve the expression of the painter's thought and emotions. When isolated from the concrete picture, the brush and ink would be meaningless. On the basis of the painting approach of "Hitting the Water and Hitting the Powder" 撞水撞粉by the brothers Ju Chao居巢 (1811-1889), Ju Lian 居廉 (1828-1904) and their disciples Gao Jianfu 高剑父 (1879-1951), Gao Qifeng 高奇峰 (1889—1933) and Chen Shuren 陈树人 (1884-1948) of the Lingnan Painting School accepted the concept of the usage of colour of the Japanese painting and the Western painting and started the reform of colour in the Chinese painting by applying light or heavy colours in the Chinese painting. Huang Gesheng黄格胜 (1950- , fig. 9-10), the leading artist of the Lijiang Painting School, believed that "ink does not interfere with colour, colour does not interfere with ink, ink does not interfere with ink, colour does not interfere with colour, colour gets along well with ink."

墨不碍色，色不碍墨，墨不碍墨，色不碍色，色墨相生[6]

3. The embodiment of image colour in traditional Chinese painting

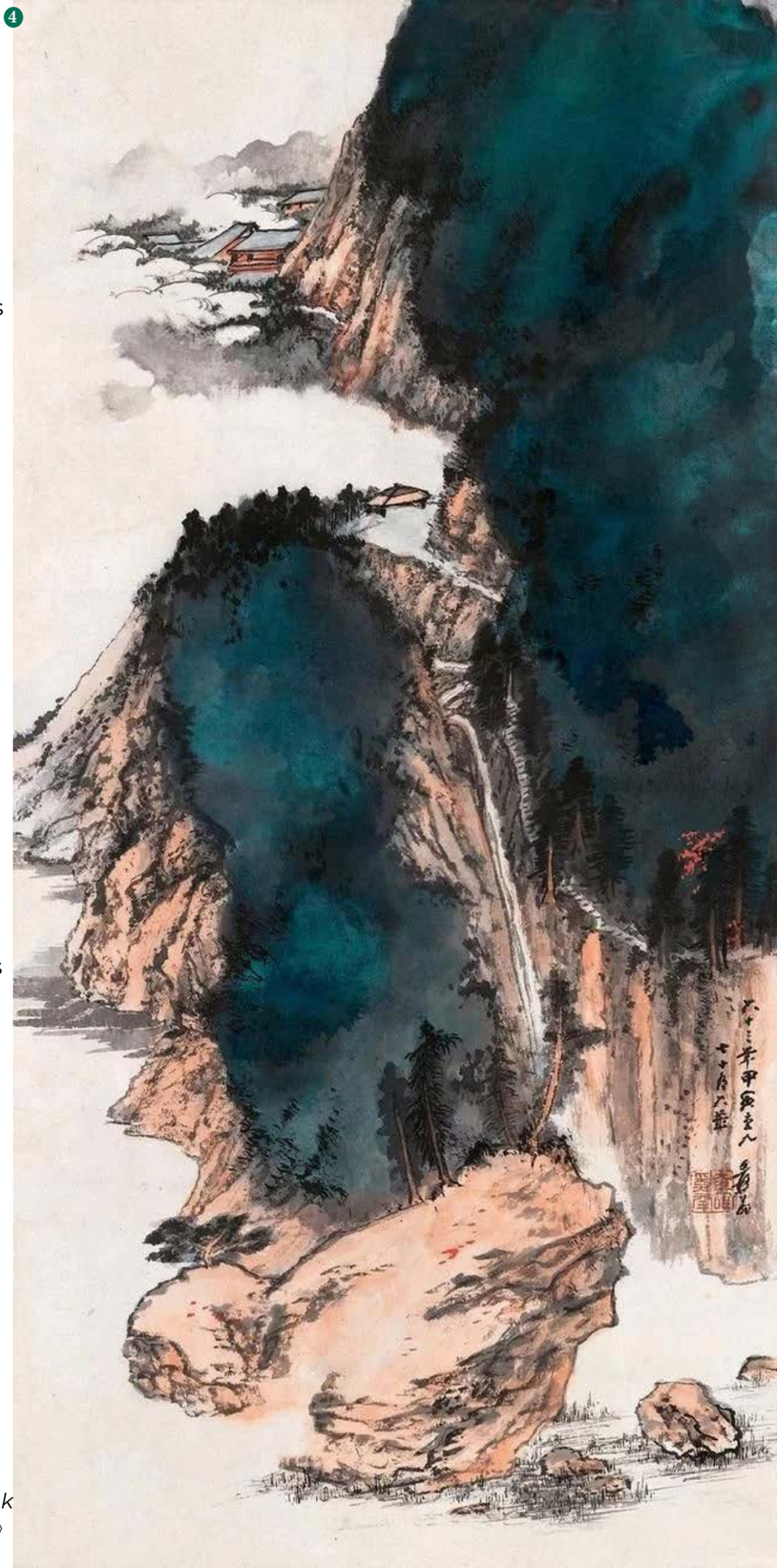
While painting bamboo, Zheng Banqiao 郑板桥(1693-1766) had three steps: bamboo in the eyes, bamboo in the heart and bamboo in the hand. By observing the bamboo, through the art experience, the painter finally forms a conception of the bamboo image in the heart, and then conveys it to the painting. This distilling process is to make the aesthetic object an image. The painter depicts the object's shape and colour with his own emotion.

3.1. Images

What is an image? Confucius once said, "A book can not express the author completely. Language can not express ourselves completely. So, why can't the sage author of Zhouyi 周易 be completely understood? Confucius said, the sage set up an image to fulfill his purpose." It tells us to grasp the internal rules of everything through its appearance so as to form a conception yi 意, and finally an image yixiang 意象 of it. "Image" here is the harmonious unity of objective form, the subjective spirit and the artist's interest. It is the unity of subjectivity and objectivity in the integration of subject into object. In short, it is the combi-

6 Feng Fengju, *A Collection of Huang Gesheng's Manuscripts,* Guangxi Fine Arts Publishing House, 2021
冯凤举，《问道榕荫楼—黄格胜课稿辑录》，广西美术出版社2021

4



Zhang Daqian, *Splashed-ink Mountain and water* 《泼墨山水》

nation of the painter and his aesthetic objects.

3.2. Image colour

Image colour refers to the colour application approach created by the artist through the feeling of the colour of the aesthetic object, which is the combination of emotion and the scene, the nature and the human. External learning from nature would form an image in the heart. The artist perceives the objective nature from inside the heart, and converts the internal emotion into the meaningful external image. The aesthetic realm of Chinese art is not to restore nature or to please the eyes, but to express the emotion and express the meaning, and to connect with nature.

3.3. The embodiment of colour image in the Chinese painting

Influenced by Taoism, the image of Chinese painting lies between being and naught, void and reality. In the grasp of the concrete image and the abstract image, this kind of idealistic colour-giving concept is the beauty of compromise based on the artistic spirit of harmonious integration of object and self. From the manners of Wei and Jin 魏晋 in the Six Dynasties 六朝 to the luxury of Tang people, the elegance of Song people, the leisure of Yuan people, the humour of Ming people, and the simplicity of Qing people, the long history of Chinese colours always radiates the light of images.

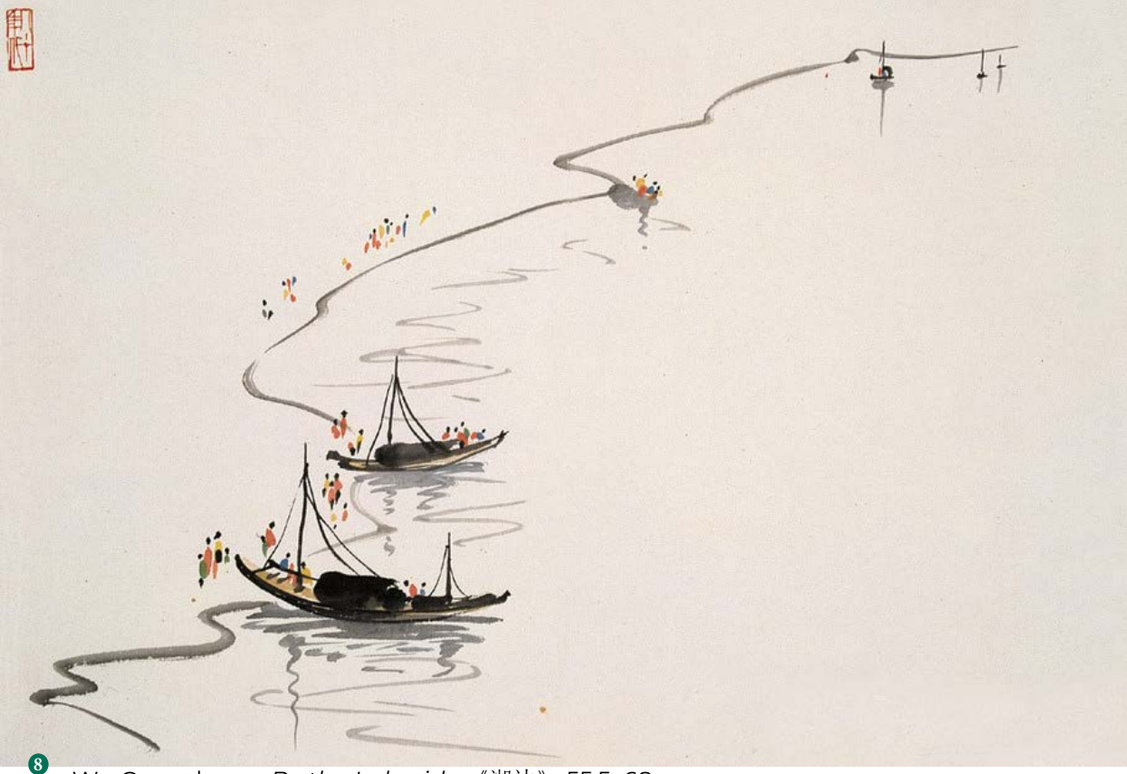
Wang Wei王维 (701-761) was the first artist to create the Pomo破墨 ink and landscape painting，which got rid of the grandiose style of the previous landscape paintings. Jing, Guan, Dong, Ju荆关董巨 (Jing Hao 荆浩, Guan Tong 关仝, Dong Yuan 董源, Ju Ran巨然) initiated the North Painting School and the South Painting School. According to the regional characteristics of aesthetic objects in the original ink painting, the characteristics of the north and south landscape were highlighted; the four famous painters in Yuan Dynasty depicted their heart emotion, instead of pursuing realism, just focusing on the artistic conception and verve. Xu Wei 徐渭 (1521-1593) had bad luck all his life. He attempted nine suicides, but all failed. He disliked the daily life and the world. So with his brush, ink and lines, he created depressed and sad works.

6 Lin Fengmian, *Different Thinking in One Harmony* 《三思》35x35

4. The current context of the Chinese painting colour

Each country and each era have a corresponding form of artistic expression. Chinese traditional painting in ancient times has the reputation of "Danqing" 丹青. Silk paintings of Mawangdui 马王堆, Dunhuang frescoes 敦煌壁画 (fig.11) made a

7 Li Keran The Setting Sun After Rain 《雨后斜阳图》 68x45.5



8 Wu Guanzhong, *By the Lakeside* 《湖边》 55.5x68

Huang Gesheng, *Wonderland* 《仙境》 50x60 2009

9

Xu Beihong, *In Autumn* 《秋兴图》

12

perfect combination of dark lines and heavy colour. Wei and Jin 魏晋. Southern and Northern Dynasties 南北朝 achieved great things in colour aesthetics. Colour in Tang Dynasty was splendid and perfect. In Song Dynasty, the colour in painting is simple, light and elegant. Thus the use of colour in painting lasted over one thousand years. And then from Qing Dynasty on, things are different.

4.1. Difficult exploration under the background of neocolonialism

During the late Qing Dynasty, when the colourful paintings of the Western world flowed into China, many painters rethought colour in Chinese painting. They wanted to reform the art world from the use of colours for paintings, coming out from the simple and light world and tried to fit in the new world.

In terms of colour, Ren Bonian used the "vulgar colour", which is the most taboo of literati painting, and integrated the folk colour painting style and the elements of western watercolour into his works, thus realizing the taste of both being refined and popular. Zhao Zhiqian赵之谦 (1829-1884) tried many colours together, which set off mutually, and showing that Chinese painting had transformed from the traditional to modern context. Xu Beihong 徐悲鸿 (1895-1953, fig.12) advocated the integrating western classical realism painting techniques into the creation of the Chinese painting on the basis of inheriting traditional Chinese painting, integrating ancient and modern, Domestic and foreign painting styles into one. This plays a connecting role in the history of Chinese art.

4.2. Continued attempts under the background of new ideological trend

With the reform and opening up, the Chinese culture has combined with the western art. The Chinese painting once again faces the influence of "the new ideological trend". Firstly, the continuation of the traditional ink painting. Adhering to the traditional expression of ink while absorbing western modern composition elements, in a new composition and colour system, artists will

find a fluent unity of the emotion and the outside world. Secondly, the experiment of abstract ink painting. In terms of painting materials and tools, we have other choices besides Xuan paper and plain silk, such as other comprehensive materials, which can improve the creation of traditional ink painting.

Chinese painting embraces the world with a broad mind, and identifies, absorbs excellence from the painting art of various nationalities. However, the gene can not be lost. No matter how, the colour of the essence of the Chinese painting will not change. The expression of the Chinese painting must be the painter's inner emotion. The expression styles of colour may have the difference between Chinese and Western, old and new, but the colour to express the painter's "meaning" is not limited to time and space. The ultimate performance of a painter is self-cultivation, talent, tolerance and aesthetic ability. If the painter is only good at skills without inner emotions, then he can only be a painting labour. Only with the understanding of the beauty of "image" can the painter firmly hold the spiritual home of Chinese painting colour.

11

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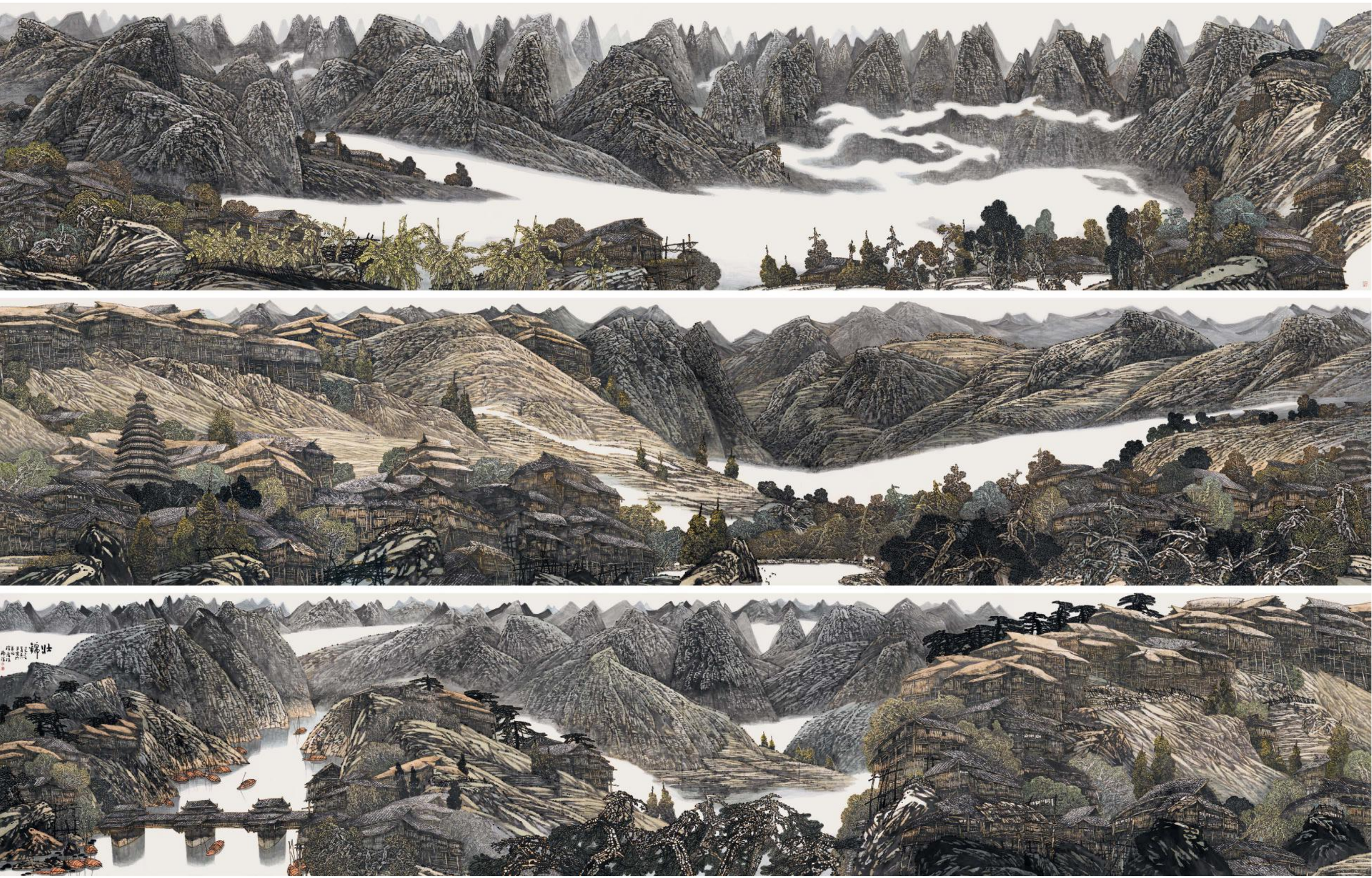
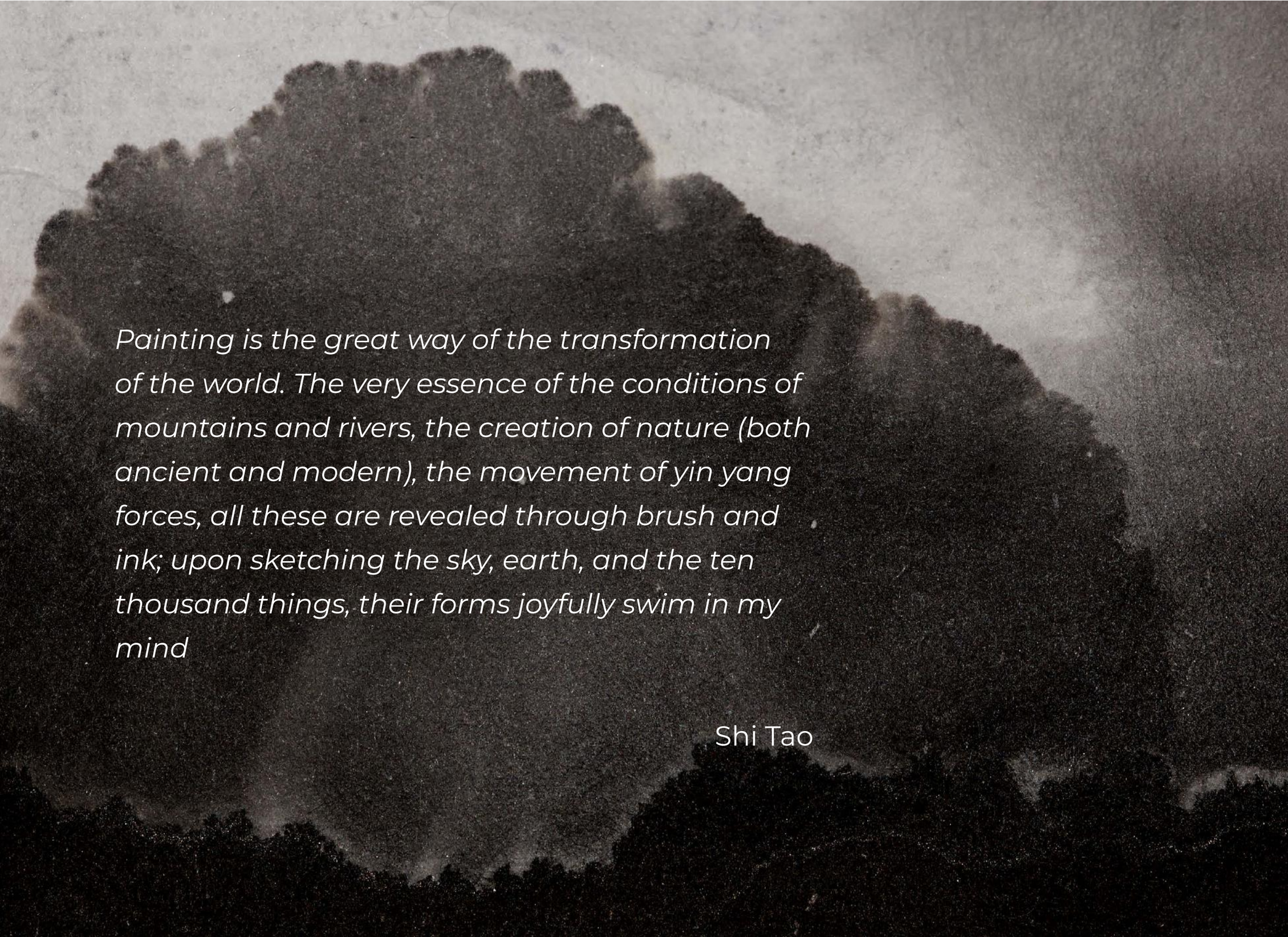
His achievements include works collected to the Nationwide or Provincial exhibitions
Publications: *Huang Gesheng and Education, Huanggesheng and Lijiang, The Mission of Art*

Feng Fengju, *Kunlun Pass 1940* 《昆仑关 1940》 125x158, 2020



10 Huang Gesheng, *Zhuang Brocade* 《锦壮》240x3700, 2012


Painting is the great way of the transformation of the world. The very essence of the conditions of mountains and rivers, the creation of nature (both ancient and modern), the movement of yin yang forces, all these are revealed through brush and ink; upon sketching the sky, earth, and the ten thousand things, their forms joyfully swim in my mind

Shi Tao

《四季山水圖冊》*Mountains and Streams in the Four Seasons*
Album leaf, ink and colour on paper
21 x 31.4 Metropolitan Museum of Art

The Philosophy of Life in the Philosophy of Art in Shitao 石涛 's *Huayulu* 《画语录》

Part 1

By; Claudio D. Lucchi

Abstract

The present essay is an attempt to explore to core values of Shitao 石涛 's famous treatise on painting, the *Huayulu* 《画语录》. Beginning with an assessment of the position given to the Huayulu in the field of Western Chinese studies, and to existing translations and commentaries in particular (section 2), the present study offers a short literary appreciation of the text (section 3) before focus-ing on its philosophical nature (section 4). Through sections 5, 6, and 7, it dwells on three major as-pects developed by Shitao, namely personal identity, non-rule, and the process of transformation in art. As a conclusion, section 8 discusses the *Huayulu* 《画语录》 's significance in our present day.

1. Introduction

Since its writing during the early Qing 清 dynasty (1644-1911), Shitao's treatise on painting *Huayulu* 《画语录》[1] has never ceased to startle and fascinate generations of readers, artists, and scholars alike, through the shrewdness of its remarks on the very essence of the art of paint-ing. Although short in length, Shitao's essay presents itself to the reader as a solid, well-rounded text that dives straight at the heart of its subject, bravely tackling a topic that had become highly critical in an era that saw Chinese mountain-and-water painting (*shanshui hua* 山水画) reach un-precedented heights of codification and conventionalisation, i.e., the very essence of painting, its origins, purpose, and meaning.

The *Huayulu*'s most prominent feature is, undoubtedly, its deep philosophical nature. This is not a unique characteristic per se. One would only have to go over some of the most important trea-tises composed in ancient times — such as Zong Bing 宗炳 's *Hua Shanshui Xu* 《画山水序》, Jing Hao 荆浩 's *Bifaji* 《笔法记》, Guo Xi 郭熙's *Linquan Gaozhi* 《林泉高致》, or Shen Zong-qian 沈宗骞 's *Jiezhou Xuehua Bian* 《芥舟学画编》— to find out that they all touch, in one way or another, upon the philosophical nature of art. None of them, however, has gone so far as to treat the art of painting, even its most technical aspects, from a philosophical perspective. Through his bold and unconventional approach, Shitao's artistic view finds its roots firmly planted at the origin of the universe, and expands itself way beyond the borders of the artistic field, thus reaching out into the infinite.

We should not be surprised to find that some of the ideas developed by Shitao reverberate throughout Henri Focillon's *Vie des formes* (*The Life of Forms in Art*) and resonate in harmony with certain philosophical concepts put forth by Wassily Kandinsky in his monograph, *Über das Geistige in der Kunst* (*Concerning the Spiritual in Art*), and his 1912 essay, *Über die Formfrage*[2] (*Concerning the Problem of Form*).

In this sense, one may better understand why the *Huayulu* has been hailed by both Chinese and Western scholars as "one of the highest and most complete expressions of Chinese aesthetics"[3] . Its philosophical dimension turns it into a bridge, a platform on which Eastern and Western artistic thoughts and concepts may effectively meet and transform each other. Although they expressed themselves in distinctly different ways, and thus developed respective styles that were quite con-trasting in both form and content, it may not be irrelevant to point out that Shitao

1 Also referred to as Shitao *Huayulu* 石涛画语录 (*Shitao's Remarks on Painting*) or *Kugua Heshang Huayulu* 苦瓜和尚画语录 (*Remarks on Painting by the monk Bitter Melon*).

2 Wassily Kandinsky, Max Bill (ed. and comm.). *Essays über Kunst und Künstler*, Benteli Verlag, Bern, 1973 (3. Aulf.), pp. 17-47.

3 Pierre Ryckmans. *Les propos sur la peinture de Shi Tao — Traduction et commentaire*. In: Arts asiatiques. Tome 14, 1966, p. 79.

and Kandinsky equally probed into the metaphysical nature of the art of painting, grounding their artistic corpus on a comprehensive philosophical system of thought. Both painters started from the finite and tended towards the infinite, and endeavoured to express "all variations through the invariable" [4] 不化而应化[5].

2. Prominence of Shitao's Huayulu in Western studies.

A brief assessment of the position attributed to the *Huayulu* in the field of Western Chinese studies, and to existing translations and commentaries in particular, will amply illustrate the high es-teem in which this particular treatise is held by Western scholars. In English alone, Shitao's treatise has already been translated over four times. In 1936, Osvald Sirén proposed a first partial translation in his study *The Chinese on the Art of Painting: Translations and Comments* (New York: Schocken Books, 1936, reprinted 1963), which he revised and presented again to his readers two decades later, in *Chinese Painting, Leading Masters and Principles* (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1956-58, 7 vols.). A first unabridged translation by Lin Yutang 林语堂 was published in 1967, in *The Chinese Theory of Art* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1967).

Dissatisfied with Sirén's and Lin Yutang's versions, which he regarded as "highly literal" for one, and as "highly literary"[6] for the other, Prof. Earle J. Coleman (Virginia Commonwealth Univer-sity, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies) proposed a new translation of the *Huayulu* in 1978, with an in-depth, chapter by chapter analysis, which put particular emphasis on the treatise's Taoist character and Shitao's philosophy of art. Another distinguishing feature of Coleman's version, in contrast with Sirén's and Lin Yutang's, is his choice to translate the *Huapu* 《画谱》 (*Manual on Painting*, dated 1710 and discovered in China in 1961) — instead of the previously translated *Huayulu* —, considered by some (including Prof. Coleman) to be a later and refined rendition of the original *Huayulu*[7]. When discussing purely painterly aspects, Coleman's study may be found to be somewhat lacking in coherence. This may however be accepted as a minor excusable point, given that Prof. Coleman's speciality was Chinese philosophy, and in this area, his monograph truly ac-complishes the purpose it set out to conquer in the first place, videlicet to explore and expound the philosophical dimension of Shitao's treatise.

4 Earle J. Coleman. *Philosophy of Painting by Shih-T'ao — A Translation and Exposition of his Hua-P'u*, Mouton Pub-lishers, The Hague, 1978, p. 106.

5 道济［著］俞剑华［标点注释］.《石涛画语录》；北京：人民美术出版社；2019.5（重印）；p. 13.

6 Earle J. Coleman, p. 33.

7 The anteriority or posteriority of the two existing versions of Shitao's treatise, the *Huapu* 画谱 and the *Huayulu* 画语录, is a matter of debate. The Belgian sinologist Pierre Ryckmans, for one, saw in the Huayulu the final and later ver-sion of the earlier and rudimentary *Huapu*.

For a discussion on the two existing versions of Shitao's treatise, compare Earle J. Coleman's *Philosophy of Painting by Shih-T'ao* (pp. 26-31) and Pierre Ryckmans' *Les propos sur la peinture de Shi Tao* (p. 79).

《山水圖冊》*Mountains and Streams* 14.9 x 27.3

In 1966, thus one year prior to the publication of the *Huayulu*'s first integral English version, the magazine *Arts Asiatiques* presented its readers with *Les propos sur la peinture de Shi Tao*, the treatises's first French version, translated and thoroughly commented by Pierre Ryckmans. A more exhaustive version was later published under the title Les propos sur la peinture du moine Citrouille-Amère (Éditions Hermann, 1996). Les propos sur la peinture de Shi Tao remains to this day the only French translation of Shitao's work and has been saluted as a brilliant work by François Cheng 程抱一, who quoted large extracts from it in *Vide et plein: Le langage pictural chinois* (Éditions du Seuil, 1991), a philosophical study of Chinese mountains-and-waters painting featuring a case study of Shitao's oeuvre.

More recent translations of the *Huayulu* include Helmut Brinker's German version, *Aufgezeichnete Worte des Mönchs Bittermelone zur Malerei* (Mainz: Dieterich'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 2009), as well as *Discorsi sulla pittura del monaco Zucca Amara* (Jouvence, 2015), a complete Italian translation by Marcello Ghilardi.

Among the monographs dedicated to Shitao and his art may be cited François Cheng's *Shitao: La saveur du monde* (Phébus, 1998) and Jonathan Hay's *Shitao: Painting and Modernity in Early Qing China* (New

York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
Perhaps one sentence by Pierre Ryckmans, from his opening remarks to his *Les propos sur la peinture de Shi Tao*, may best explain the reason lying behind this impressive corpus of translations and in-depth analyses that have been dedicated since the early twentieth century to this one single treatise on painting:

Le traité de Shi Tao occupe une place privilégiée dans l'ensemble des théories chinoises de la peinture: il se situe tout à la fois au terme et au sommet d'une longue tradition dont il rassemble les ri-chesses essentielles; puisant de manière syncrétique aux diverses sources de la pensée classique, il donne à la théorie picturale la forme d'une synthèse philosophique originale qui, de l'aveu général des critiques chinois et occidentaux, constitue une des expressions les plus hautes et les plus complètes de l'esthétique chinoise.[8]

Shitao's treatise occupies a privileged place within the body of Chinese painting theory: it stands both at the end and at the top of a long tradition of which it brings together the essential riches; drawing in a syncretic fashion from the various sources of classical thought, it gives to the pictorial theory the shape of an original philosophical synthesis which is recognised by Chinese and Western critics alike as constituting one of the highest and most complete expressions of Chinese aesthetics.[9]

8 Pierre Ryckmans, p. 79.
9 Personal translation of the original French text.

《山水圖冊》*Mountains and Streams* 27.6 x 24.1

3. Tone and flavour of Shitao's *Huayulu*

As one takes up the *Huayulu*, the uniqueness of its tone and nature, as well as its author's lit-erary disposition, reveal themselves instantly.

Contrarily to Zhang Yanyuan 张彦远, who greets the reader at the beginning of his *Lidai Minghua Ji* 《历代名画记》 with a few chosen words on the moral value of the art of painting, or Guo Si 郭思, who likewise unveils the *Linquan Gaozhi* 《林泉高致》 through a few general considera-tions on the role played by painting in a gentleman's (*junzi* 君子) moral cultivation, Shitao dives straight at the heart of his subject, while simultaneously taking his reader back at the origin of the universe, revealing from the start his one-stroke concept (*yihua* 一画) and his metaphysical stance.

The *Huayulu* may indeed startle some by its detached, confident, and profound tone, yet marked in places by a flame of proud defiance mingled with hints of gentle mockery. Various schol-ars have both acknowledged the high artistic and literary value of the *Huayulu*, and found them-selves baffled by the great difficulty it posed during translation.

In *The Chinese Theory of Art*, Lin Yutang appraised Shitao's treatise in the following terms:

It is completely original and shows a psychological insight into the process of artistic creation not found

elsewhere in Chinese literature. In style, it is archaically beautiful, terse and taut with meaning, and very difficult to render into English. But of all Chinese essays on art, this is the most profound ever writ-ten, both as regards content and style.[10]

Osvald Sirén, on the other hand, while recognising the high value of Daoji 道济[11]'s essay, seems to have found its rendering into modern English rather an ordeal:

... the Hua Yü Lu is one of the most extraordinary contributions to the discussions of the theory and prac-tice of painting, but couched in terms which, in part at least, offers evasive problems of interpre-tation. The terminology is largely borrowed from Taoist sources and it is applied with an abundant use of antitheses, repe-titions and cosmological metaphors of a very abstruse kind.[12]

However, Sirén's decision to abridge[13] the *Huayulu*, deeming a full version to be unnecessary and "hardly enjoy-able to Western readers"[14], is highly deplorable, and denotes a mindset too preoc-cupied with issues strictly related to pure theory and art history to realise that an artistic essay, just like a work of art, is an attempt to reach the infinite and must needs be appreciated in its integrity in order to understand (emotionally as well as intellectually) its full scope and purpose.

Truly, only a full text as provided by Pierre Ryckmans and Earle J. Cole-man offers Western readers a chance to savour the dense and complex taste of Shitao's treatise, along with its discreet hints and undertones.

The author of the present essay feels that even more than Prof. Coleman, it is Mr. Ryckmans who best succeeded in bringing out in his French version some of the particular literary flavours pre-sent in the original Chinese text, displaying in his chapter by chapter analysis an outstanding com-mand of Chinese classic literature, philoso-phy, and painting.

Admittedly, any uninformed read-er — that is, lacking a fundamen-tal knowledge of classic moun-tains-and-waters painting literature, of Shitao's work and life path, and of the main artistic trends of that period — might find it quite hard to appreciate the true value of the Huayulu. On the other hand, it would be a mistake to believe that a high level of specialisation in one particular field would allow a better reading of Daoji's essay. Academic specialisation, as it is known today, is a rather recent phenomenon that became prominent only through-out the second half of the twentieth century. In the field of humanities, excessive expertise in one particular subject presents two main dangers: it may cause its practitioner to lose himself in abstractions, which could in turn lead to a very narrow and unilateral understanding of reality, or any given topic. More than specialisa-tion, more than profound knowledge, what is required in order to enjoy an essay as unconventional and individ-ualistic as the *Huayulu* is a creative mindset, a certain familiarity with the creative act, and a highly developed sensibility vis-à-vis the universe and emotional reality.

Without such characteristics, it would become difficult to grasp Shitao's subtle and apparently conflicting undertones — all directly linked to his tormented and equally conflicted inner nature —, as he boldly unfolds the quintessence of his artistic and philosophical vision under the read-er's eyes.

Furthermore, one ought not to feel surprised or confused by the seem-ingly abstruse manner in which Shitao addresses his readers. Every painter knows that images reach way beyond the written word. Hence, it is never easy to discuss painting in writing. But besides this technical difficulty, there exists another reality that may elude the accomplished theorist, for it belongs to the painter's whimsical nature: unlike academic scholars, painters are not necessarily keen to express themselves clearly, preferring to see their viewers toil to extract spiritual nourishment from their works. After all, what pleasure or sense of accomplishment is there in presenting the viewer with a ready meal?

《山水圖冊》*Mountains and Streams* 21 x 31.4

10 Lin Yutang, p. 140.
11 One of Shitao's monastic names (*faming* 法名).
12 Osvald Sirén. T*he Chinese on the Art of Painting*, Schocken Books, New York, 1963, p. 182.
13 Ibid.
14 Ibid.

《山水圖冊》*Mountains and Streams* 21 x 31.4

4. Philosophical nature of the *Huayulu*

《画语录》十八章是一个整体，是一个完整的有机的体系。从无到有，从简到繁，从一到万，逐渐发展，然后又从有到无，从繁到简，从万复归于一，层层统属。[15]

The Huayulu's eighteen chapters constitute a whole, complete, and organic system. From noth-ing to existence, from simplicity to complexity, from one to ten thousand, it develops gradually, and then from existence to nothing, from complexity to simplicity, from ten thousand to one, it gradually re-cedes.[16]

Through the introductory lines of the Huayulu, Shitao takes his reader back, not to the root of the art of painting, but to the very commencement of all things. With a few well rounded sentences, he asserts that painting is not an activity or entity per se, but that it proceeds from Creation itself, to which it finds itself linked through the creative act. In other words, through brush and ink, the painter emulates the elementary process of creation. Seen under this light, painting is not a simple physical or intellectual activity; it becomes a form of life.

夫画：天下变通之大法也，山川形势之精英也，古今造物之陶冶也，陰陽气度之流行也，借笔墨以写天地万物而陶泳乎我也。[17]

Painting is the great way of the transformation of the world. The very essence of the conditions of mountains and rivers, the creation of nature (both ancient and modern), the movement of yin yang forc-es, all these are revealed through brush and ink; upon sketching heaven, earth, and the ten thousand things, their forms joyfully swim in my mind.[18]

Shitao regularly reasserts this fundamental concept throughout his essay, first "从无到有" (from nothing to existence), and then "从有到无" (from existence to nothing), as may be seen in the opening sentences of Chapter VII:

笔与墨会，是为氤氲。氤氲不分，是为混沌，闢混沌者，舍一画而谁耶？[19]

The union of brush and ink is that of yin and yun. The indistinct fusion of yin and yun consti-tutes the original chaos. How could one open up the original chaos, if not through the one-stroke? [20]

Having begun his most unorthodox essay with such elevated, philosophical considerations, Daoji naturally anticipated his reader's astonishment, who, judging by the work's title — *Remarks on Painting* —, possibly expected a more technical manual along the lines of the *Xie Shanshui Jue* 《写山水诀》, attributed to Huang Gongwang 黄公望. In Chapter VI, he thus addresses this issue in the following terms :

或曰：「绘谱画训，章章发明，用笔用墨，处处精细。自古以来，从未有山海之形势，驾诸空言，託之同好。想大涤子性分太高，世外立法，不屑从浅近处下手耶？」异哉斯言也！受之于远，得之最近；识之于近，役之于远。[21]

Some may say: 'Painting treatises and drawing instructions manifest quite clearly the application of brush and ink, every detail being very carefully explained. Ever since the ancients, never before has painting the scenery of mountains and seas

15 道济［著］俞剑华［标点注释］.《石涛画语录》；p. 81.
16 Translation mine
17 道济［著］俞剑华［标点注释］.《石涛画语录》；p. 4.
18 Earle J. Coleman, p. 118.
19 道济［著］俞剑华［标点注释］.《石涛画语录》；p. 7.
20 Pierre Ryckmans, p. 107 (personal translation of the original French text).
21 道济［著］俞剑华［标点注释］.《石涛画语录》；p. 6.

depended upon empty theories and the prejudice of one's own preferences. I think Ta-ti-tzŭ's individuality is too high, establishing a method beyond the world! Does he not disregard the simple rudimentaries?' These words are strange indeed. Talent is from afar, but what one achieves is right at hand. If one grasps what is near at hand, then he can apply it to what is distant.[22]

At this point, one might assume that even the lofty Dadizi 大涤子[23] might have come to his senses and that from now on, he would duly entertain his reader with such technical questions as are conventionally required. Instead, as the following chapters unfold, the author further asserts his in-dividualistic stance and tackles from a philosophical standpoint such technical topics as scenery (literally, mountains and streams, *shanchuan* 山川) and texture strokes (*cunfa* 皴法), seemingly oblivi-ous of the recipe-like rhetoric common to various other manuals and treatises.[24]

What transpires from the *Huayulu*'s short yet dense eighteen chapters is that Shitao mainly preoccupied himself with philosophical fundamentals, videlicet the unchanging principle of Life and of the universe. Compared to this, everything else is secondary and of lesser importance, for he who grasps that fundamental, invariable rule lying at the foundation of all variable transmutations present in our universe attains true enlightenment and thus holds the key to all truth. And with "enlighten-ment", we mean not that inferior, technical understanding obtained through the systematic study of a given subject, but that higher, spiritual form of understanding, characterised by an ineffable sensi-bility towards all things. This idea is perhaps more explicitly expressed in Chapter XVIII:

古之人寄兴于笔墨，假道于山川。不化而应化，无为而有为。[25]

In the past, men expressed their feelings through brush strokes and ink wash by painting moun-tains and rivers. Their approach was to meet all variations through the invariable. They proceeded to ac-tion through non-action.[26]

He who is truly enlightened, and hence possesses the underlying truth of all things, is able to act through non-action (*wuwei er youwei* 无为而有为), i.e., in accordance with all things as they are, or, as Lin Yutang put it, "by the action of nature itself without human interference"[27]

Shitao did not despise the idea of the presence of rules and precise techniques in painting. As he remarked himself :

22 Earle J. Coleman, p. 122.
23 Dadizi 大涤子, translated by Pierre Ryckmans as "Disciple of the Great Purity" (see P. Ryckmans, p. 104): one of the many surnames used by Shitao.
24 See, for example, the already mentioned *Jiezhou Xuehua Bian* 芥舟学画编, by Shen Zongqian.
25 道济［著］俞剑华［标点注释］.《石涛画语录》；p. 13.
26 Earle J. Coleman, p. 140.
27 Lin Yutang, p. 153.

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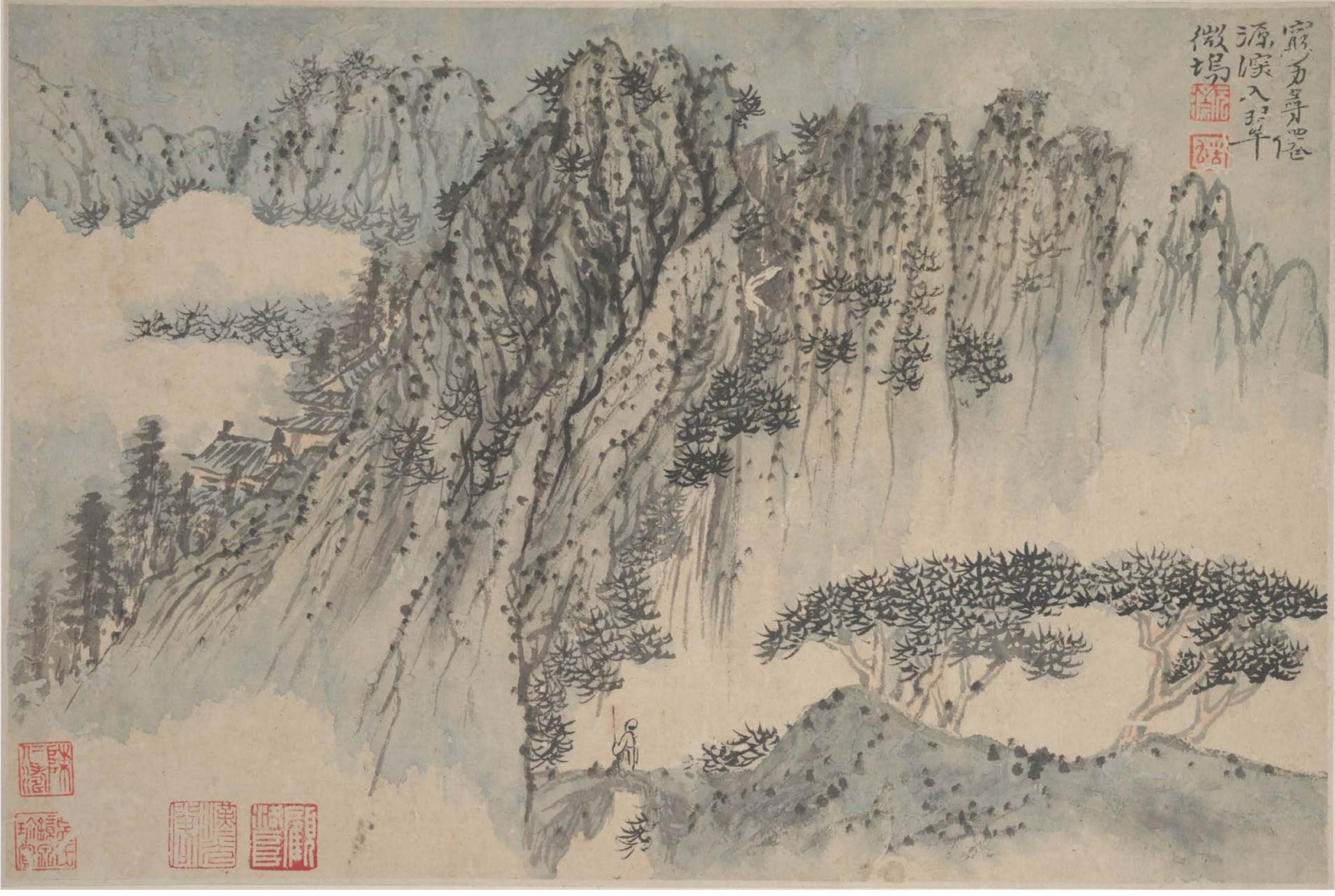
古之人未嘗不以法为也。無法則于世無限焉。[28]

The ancients did not work without rules. Absence of rules leads to absence of restraints in this world[29]

He did however fiercely disapprove of the institutionalisation of rules and techniques, and strongly warned of the dangers there are in blindly following any given rule without understanding the principle upon which it rests.
The Huayulu may be regarded as the distilled expression of Shitao's lifelong meditations on the origin and meaning of Life and of his own life, sad meditations which may be found in a more spontaneous form throughout his correspondence and the colophons inscribed on his paintings .

28 道济［著］俞剑华［标点注释］.《石涛画语录》；p. 4.
29 Translation mine



《山水圖冊》*Mountains and Streams* 14.9 x 27.3

Notes from an interview with Maurizio Paolillo

By; Davide Carnicella

For this issue we interviewed Professor Maurizio Paolillo, who teaches Chinese language and philology at the department of Asian, Africa and Mediterranean studies in ''L'Orientale'' University of Naples. His studies are focused on traditional Chinese philosophical and religious sources and his domains of expertise are Chinese literature on the pictorial aesthetics from the 5th to the 11th century, Daoist sources, the Fengshui 风水 texts from the 8th to the 12th century, the sources on the traditional gardens and the ones on Nestorianism in China from the 12th to the 14th century. His contribution to the Academia in these fields has been extremely prolific and the most remarkable publications for our purpose are: *Daoism. History, doctrines and practices* (*Daoismo. Storia, dottrine e pratiche*) 2014, *Physical and metaphysical landscapes in Eastern and Western literature* (*Paesaggi fisici e metafisici nelle letterature d'oriente e d'occidente*) 2019, which has been edited by him, but there is a broad variety of publications among books and articles worth reading.

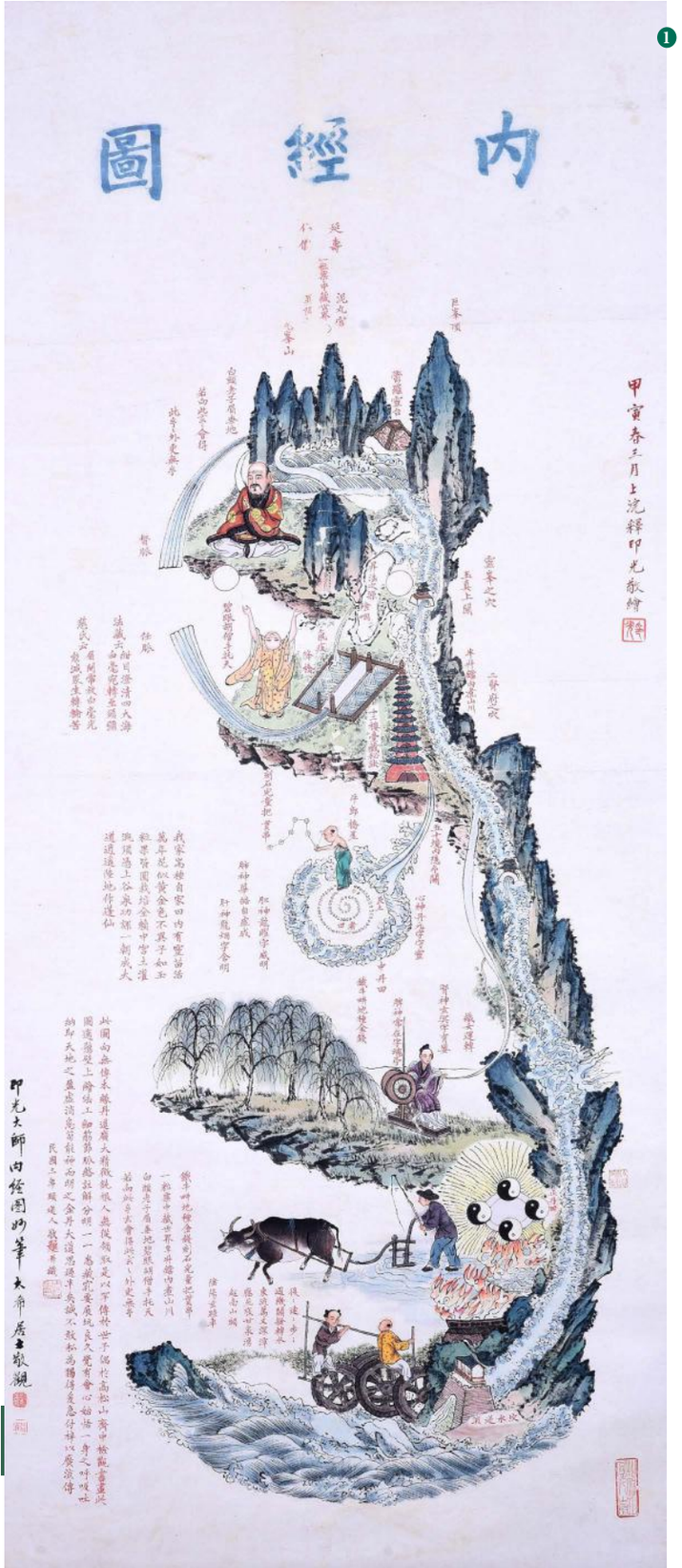
It should be pointed out to the reader that Professor Paolillo is a guest editor for the new issue of *Sulla via del Catai*, a scientific review of the "Centro studi Martino Martini". The main theme is the flora in China and Professor Paolillo contributed with an essay on *Li Deyu's Pingquan mountain villa*. In this essay, he discusses Li Deyu's interest in the description of the various botanical species he collected in southern and south-eastern China, which he placed in his villa in Pingquan 平泉. This villa was the result of his project to reproduce a large scale landscape along the shores of the Yangzi river 20 km far from Luoyang 洛阳, the other historically important capital, being Chang' An 长安 (today Xi'an 西安) the capital of the Tang dynasty. The classical quotations in this treatise refer to the ancient treatises on botany, the poet of the Warring states period Qu Yuan 屈原, the Book of Odes 《诗经》, the prose-poem *Returning home* 《归去来兮辞》 by Tao Yuanming 陶渊明 and the *Daodejing* 《道德经》 for the theme of the retreat and thus of the knowledge of the world without leaving the room.

By taking the spark offered by this last theme, we considered the "Journey in the room" 卧游 which Zong Bing 宗炳 asserts in the 5th century referring to the effect his *shanshui hua* 山水画, mountain and water paintings had on him. Professor Paolillo argued that beyond the romantic view of this theme, as well as of the "Free wandering" 逍遥游, this theme represents an extremely precise condition. *You*游, literally translated as journey, from a doctrinal point of view, consists in the ability of being unfettered from spatial determinations. It is not a simple status dictated by the instinct, but it is a condition in which the subject frees the self from these spatial determinations.

This condition is strictly bound to the ''inaction'' 无为 and to the "self-generated" or "nature" 自然. The first, parallel to the "non-commitment" 无事 is attained by the identification of the self with the Dao 道. The means through which this is made possible is an absolute practice, valuable in painting too, which arises an attitude of absolute freedom. The "non-commitment" is also supported and explained by Mencius with the metaphor of the flood control realized by Yu the Great 大禹, commenting that Yu's virtue was that he put in place his "non-commitment"; in other words, this means that he was not attached to any consequence.

All the classical texts do not make any critique on the creative action, one of the main suggestion they provide is that people should not consider their self as a thing. Concerning the practice of the internal alchemy 内丹, Song Dynasty Zhang Boduan 张伯端 clearly states that most of the people begin by the action 有为, but the key corresponds to the detachment that brings to the free wondering 游. There is an excerpt in the *Neiye* 内业, translated as "Inward training" which focuses on this aspect referring to meditative practices and to the *Shen* 神, today it is translated as "spirit", but in this case this translation should not be this one, and its descent after having cleaned the "quiet residence" of the mind/heart 心.

At this point, it seemed interesting to draw attention to the microcosm of the human body in relation to *shanshui*. The literary tradition on this concern dates back at least to the first Century CE and plunges its roots in the "inner landscape" 内经图 (fig.1). Several references provide us with an interior topography which actually matches the psycho-physical system of the human body, but they still have to be interpreted in a symbolic way. For example, the *Book of Laozi's center*《老子中经》 of the third Century or the *Classic of the yellow court* 《黄庭经》, among the others, presents the basis for the representation of the human body. These are a fundamental support for Taoist visualization and meditation, which, contrary to the common knowledge, have a very practical application. Isabelle Robinet explains that the body is the first element to focus on during the practices, so the visualization is essentially a technique.



This technique does not only focus on the internal sphere of the body, but it extends also to the external world. The sacred landscape of the Kunlun Mountains 昆仑山, which was considered as the “Axis mundi” between Heart and Heaven, as well as the residence of the immortals and of the Queen mother of the West 西王母 corresponds, in the human body, to the top of head where the “Clay ball” 泥丸 is placed. This, in Daoist alchemy can be seen as a sort of philosopher’s stone in European tradition.

Another aspect of the relationship between the inner body and the external world can be the “Grotto-heaven” 洞天 (fig.2). It should be noted that the first step of the establishment of the relation is often the internal realm. In this case, the various spiritual states of the man are represented through specific geographical places in ancient China. The contradictory term “Grotto-heaven” symbolizes a second birth reminding the uterus and it is similar in a certain way to the function of the grotto in Jesus’ birth and in Hinduist Avatar. Additionally, in ancient China and Japan, some rites were celebrated in caverns and the function consisted of drinking water from the stalactites which were seen a human breast, but this is supposedly not directly linked to the “Grotto-heavens”.

The concept of the “Grotto-heaven” dates back to the Wei Jin period and according to different beliefs, there were 10 or 36 “Grotto-heavens” in China. As for the *Shanshui*, Jing Hao 荆浩 was particularly bound to the belief of the 10 “Grotto-heavens” and his whole work is influenced by it. In fact, the *Bifa ji* 《笔法记》 begins with the discovery of a grotto and then continues with the encounter with a hermit who imparts the knowledge of painting. It is worthy to note the fact that Jing Hao evaluates Sima Chengzhen 司马承祯, the author of the *Zuowangun* 《坐忘论》, a Taoist meditative practice, as one of the best painters ever existed.

As for the *Bifa ji*, specific studies on it are accurate on its literary aspects, but neglect its evocative side. The opening part has old influences and recalls the *Record of the peach blossom spring* 《桃花源记》 by Tao Yuanming which narrates the story of a fisherman who gets lost and then finally finds himself in front of an opening on the flank of a mountain. He enters this tunnel which eventually leads to another world. This is a common topic in painting and it is represented through a mountain and a blossoming peach tree, but these never represent the new world. This last example, which stems from Taoist tradition, is one of many. Alongside, the preeminence of the internal realm stated in the Taoist doctrinal sources and in the concepts of the “Grotto-heavens” provide a fertile field which supplies the pictorial production.

Eventually, linking this discourse to the one of the free wandering, when Song dynasty Guo Ruoxu 郭若虚 talks about the Qiyun 气韵, translated as “consonance of the qi”, he says:

Generally, in painting, the “Qiyun” takes root in the “wandering of the earth” 游心; the ornamental expression of the spirit 神彩 is born from the use of the brush [...]. This is why the idea/intention 意 pre-exists the brush: the brush will circulate, and the idea will be interior. The work will be perfect, the idea/intention will be present. The image will be in consonance, the spirit will be complete. Hence, what is interior is sufficient by itself and as a consequence the spirit will be detached and the idea/intention established: thus the thought 思 will not exhaust and the brush will not get tired.

Closing the discussion of the topic with Guo Ruoxu’s quotation, the conversation dealt with the problem of the taboo of the comparative meth-

od. Professor Paolillo tackled this subject in his essay *I principi estetici nella teoria pittorica della Cina antica: per un superamento del tabù comparativo* (*Aesthetical principles in ancient chinese painting theory: going beyond the comparative taboo*). This theme casts a shadow on intercultural communication between China and Europe in a particular way, but it may be extended to other areas. The panorama presents two opposite tendencies that are supported by prestigious personalities. The first one may be represented by François Jullien, who believes Chinese thought to be "other" and the second is the approach which sees Chinese thought as an absolute point of reference in contrast to European thought.

Professor Paolillo, on the other hand, considers that cultural correspondences may be very positive, but in order to establish them, it is necessary to know the sources of both the cultures very well. He further asserts that both previously mentioned positions derive from the lack of knowledge of one or of the other tradition.

When asked to find a parallel between *shanshui* paintings and other forms of art, Professor Paolillo elicited an extremely insightful reasoning. He first admitted the unique peculiarity of this artistic production, and then took into account the need for human beings to represent the self through a place. As a matter of fact, likeness in literature and painting there may be found. The action of the artist to show the internal realm by means of representing a place on a medium is a primordial need. In this concern, *shanshui* may be seen as a reaction to this human need. A message, in order to be imparted, needs space, like a sound wave: there is no sound in the void. For this reason, it is fundamental to paint a space and Chinese culture responded to this primordial necessity by representing the self in an ideal situation through spatial references. In this sense *shanshui* is an extremely valuable human heritage.

Finally, a suggestion that Professor Paolillo gives to painters who do not have a traditional Chinese artistic education is to examine in depth the concept of "true" 真, as it is considered in the *Bifa ji*. The main reason why he says this concept is not limited to the *shanshui*, but it is a method through which it is possible to see the world and enhance an internal work. Although this quest is dependent upon certain canons, this is the way to reach a creative freedom. This is the real secret which lies behind any poietic deed.

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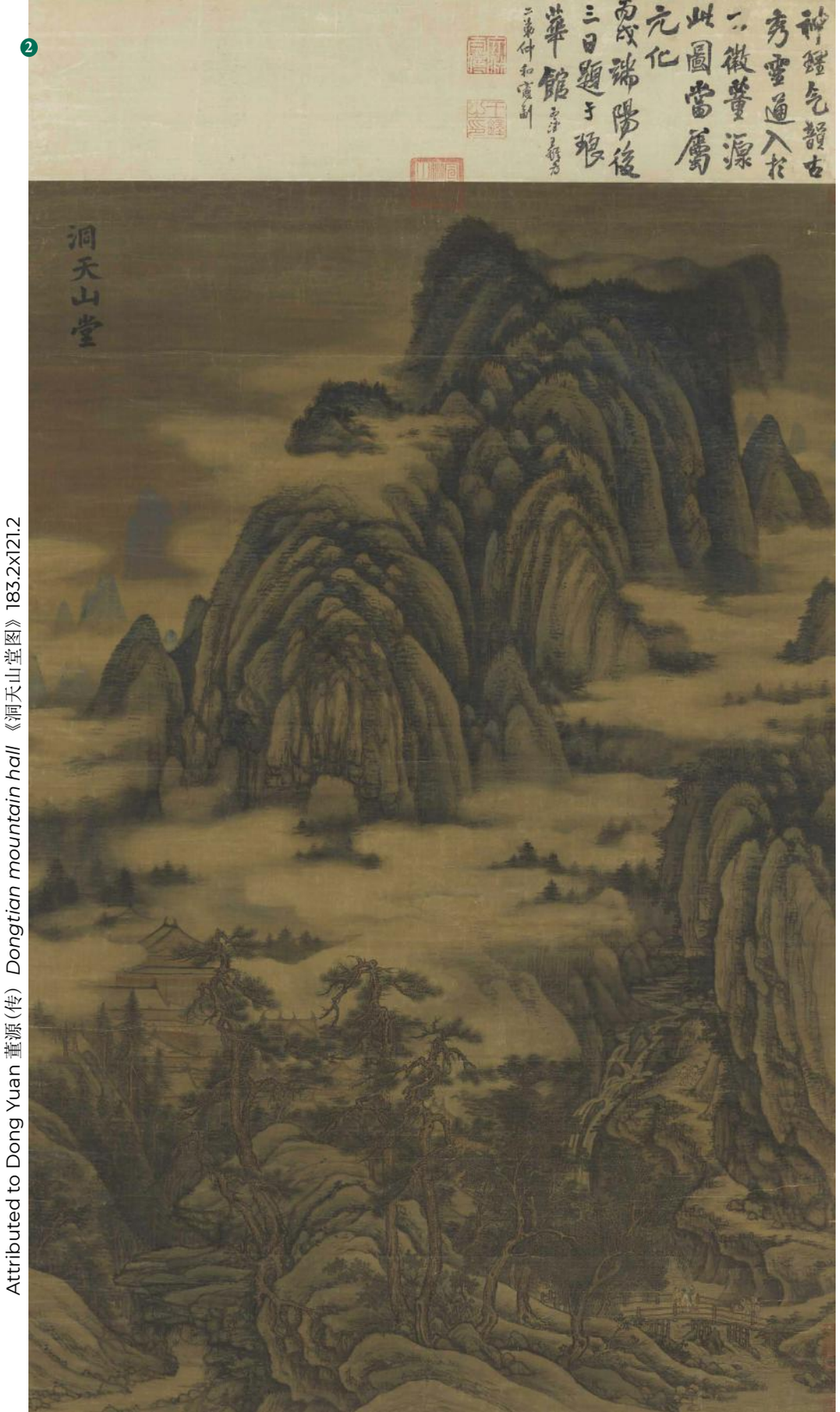

Attributed to Dong Yuan 董源(传) *Dongtian mountain hall* 《洞天山堂图》183.2x121.2

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